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631 recognized over 100 chiefdoms, mustering anything from 100 to 3,000 adult men apiece.

Although no centralized political authority existed before the
769 German occupation, certain groups of chiefdoms joined in com-
631 mon rituals directed to common ancestors. We traced four such centres of worship among the Nyakyusa; the most important being Lubaga, in the middle of the valley, where Kinga priests (from the top of the Livingstone mountains) join with many Nyakyusa chiefdoms in sacrifice to Lwembe, who is claimed as the ancestor both of the chiefs of the Nyakyusa proper, and of the Kinga. At LiKyala, on the Lake-shore plain, Kinga also join in sacrifice with the surrounding Nyakyusa chiefdoms. In Ngonde the chief connected with a similar centre of worship, Mbande, developed far-reaching secular as well as religious powers; and by the time the Europeans arrived he was established as a para-
[639] mount chief with the title of the Kyungu. This development was directly connected with the fact that Ngonde traded with the outside world, and that their Kyungu, through his control of ivory, was able also to control the guns and cloth which came into the country;[1] the Nyakyusa, remaining isolated, remained politically disunited.

Besides sacrificing to a distant ancestor in company with the representatives of a large group of chiefdoms, two or more chiefs who are neighbours participate in a sacrifice at the grove in which their common father, or grandfather, is buried. Thus common worship links both large groups of chiefdoms, whose chiefs are more or less distantly related, and small groups of contiguous chiefdoms whose chiefs are close kinsmen. The sacrifices made are to the chiefs of immediately preceding generations, and to certain great heroes of the distant past, such as Lwembe and Kyala.

769 All these sacrifices are believed to bring rain and fertility, for
the well-being of each chiefdom is thought to be bound up with
● 789 the health of the chief and the goodwill of his ancestors.

The Nyakyusa are all agreed that their chiefs, *abanyafyale*, are
173 'strangers' who came down from the Livingstone mountains
632 eight or ten generations ago, and found the valley already occu-
563 pied by people who had no knowledge of fire, but ate their food raw. The chiefs brought fire with them—some say, cattle also;

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[1] Godfrey Wilson, op. cit., pp. 2, 39-48.

622 157 neighbours, he judges their cases; he is their leader at ceremonies and in the old days he led them to war also. He represents their desires to the chief, and it is through him, and in consultation with him, that the chief gives orders. Besides this each headman [754] (*ulifumu*) is believed to protect his own villagers from witchcraft, 'to watch over the country by night', to shield men and cattle from the spiritual forces of evil.[1] To fit them for this task, village headmen are treated with medicines at the 'coming out' to give them the power of seeing and fighting witches.

622 So important is this position of village headman that legal precautions are taken 'to prevent the village headman becoming a chief', as several informants have put it to us. It is illegal to choose a village headman from among the kinsmen of a chief, and it is illegal to elect the son of a village headman to that office in any age-village of his own contemporaries, though he may perhaps inherit the position in his father's village when his father dies.

622 621 To return to the 'coming out' ceremony: when the old men have made up their minds, one of them goes among the crowd of young men, and catches hold of those they have chosen in order of seniority: first the one who is to be leader of the senior village of the first son of the old chief, then the leader of the senior village of his second son, then the leader of the next senior village of the first son, and so on. There are commonly eight age-villages of young men; of these four will belong to the chiefdom of the first son, four to that of the second. The eight new village headmen are now publicly known, four in each new chiefdom.

622 789 643 The young chiefs, together with the senior headman of each, are then treated with medicines that they may be impressive (*ukitye*). From birth a chief undergoes periodical treatment to make him impressive (*ukitye*) 'that we commoners may tremble before him'. The treatment at the 'coming out' is directed towards the same end: 'We treat him, then he will be altogether a chief, men will respect him!' The village headmen now drink the

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[192] [1] The essential meaning of a word in one culture is often illuminated by the meaning of a word from the same stem among neighbouring people. In this connection it is significant that *ifumu* in Bemba and *mfumu* in Nyanja mean 'chief', but in Ankole *abafumu* means 'magicians' (including diviners) (*African Political Systems*, p. 143), and among the Sukuma *bafumu* is used in the same sense (*Africa*, Vol. XIX, p. 14). cf. H. H. Johnston, *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, Vol. II, p. 270.

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medicines of power for the first time, and these are thought to create or develop in them *amanga*, that is, the power of seeing and fighting witches (*vide infra, pp.* 96-102). To the senior headman of each young chief is handed a magic horn to attract people to the country. 'The horn is the luck of the chief that many people may come to build.' To each is given also a magic tail, which, it is believed, will enable him to dream of wars that are approaching and which, together with a magic spear, he carries into battle. 'The spear of the chieftainship is to fight battles with, it is manhood, strength.' The horn, the tail, and the spear are emblems of office handed on by the senior village headman of the old chief to the senior headmen of the young chiefs. They were treated periodically by a special doctor and a set was provided for each independent chiefdom at the coming out. The treatment of these emblems is now rarely undertaken—we were fortunate to see it once. The Nyakyusa say that since the country has been pacified, it has become unnecessary; its purpose was to secure success in war. 622 789 643

The next stage in the action is the one from which the whole institution takes its name: 'the coming out' (*ubusoka*). The two young chiefs are secluded for a few hours in the hut of the old chief's first wife, where they receive various forms of magical treatment, and when this is finished someone outside knocks at the door and cries 'Come out!' Then, to quote the words of a village headman who told us about his own 'coming out', 'The director of ceremonies said: "Get up!" The chiefs got up and came out (*basokile*)[1] of the house to us, and we, the crowd of young men, cried "Come on!" and welcomed them. Then we all ran shouting and calling the war cry towards the next chiefdom. In the old days we should have invaded that country to take cattle and to bring them back and eat them at the new huts which we build next. But that is finished now.' The senior headmen of the new chiefdom lead the charge, each grasping his war tail, his 622 643

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[1] cf. the traditional Nyakyusa greeting (now archaic) '*Usokile*' literally meaning 'You have come out (of the house)' i.e. 'Good morning!' This greeting was not confined to those who had been through the *ubusoka* ceremony. [576]

A comparison of the meaning of the root in other Bantu languages is again suggestive. In Xhosa *ukusoka* means 'to install circumcised lads into manhood by giving them presents when they come out from their seclusion and are publicly acknowledged as men by the assembly of men' (Kropf, *A Kafir English Dictionary*); *ubusoka* means bachelorhood, celibacy (of a circumcised man, not a boy). [182]

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law to avoid her father-in-law, another informant said: 'It is for- 775
bidden to look at fathers-in-law. If we do look then we shall not 626
die well, we shall long to die and not be able to do so, because 754
both those below (the dead) and those above (the living) are angry. Yes, it is the witches we mean when we say "those above".'

c. The age-village and medicines

Unlike the belief in witchcraft and 'the breath of men', which 757
mainly affects relationships within a village, or the ancestor cult 789
which is confined to the relations between kinsmen, and between chief and people, the use of medicines (*imikota*)[1] enters into every type of relationship in Nyakyusa society. Medicines are employed to win success in almost every undertaking: cultivating, herding, hunting, love-making, war. They are regarded as one of the main props of authority; the impressiveness (*amisigo*) of a chief, and the power of a village headman to command, being directly related to the medicines with which they are treated (*vide supra*, pp. 24–5). They are resorted to for the promotion of fertility, for the treatment of the sick, and for protection and retaliation generally, as well as the means of directly harming an enemy. Medicines are believed to operate along with other mystical powers. For example, they are an essential element in rituals directed to the ancestors, and they are used for the discovery of witchcraft (in the ordeal) as well as for protection against it, and for the treatment of patients thought to have been 'eaten' by the witches or chilled by 'the breath of men'. Used alone, medicines are held to be ineffective against witchcraft or 'the breath of men', but they are regarded as a useful complement to other action, such as the banishment of the witch or the repentance of the sinner.

The power of witchcraft or of defence against witches (*amanga*) 754
is connected with medicines, for it is thought often to be acquired 757
for defensive purposes (and more rarely for aggressive purposes) 789
through drinking medicines (*vide* pp. 93, 101). But the powers of witchcraft, or witch defence, and of medicines are quite distinct; the one implies a peculiar physical condition, the presence of one or more pythons in the belly, whereas the other may be bought from a doctor and used by anyone, and its

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[1] The root *-kota* implies something derived from a piece of [illegible], a wooden stool.

758 efficacy neither depends upon nor affects the user's anatomy. 757 The creation and control of wild animals, for example, is thought 789 to turn on knowing the right medicines, not on any innate power, and is not therefore classed as witchcraft.

The Nyakyusa hold that just as 'python power' may be put to 791 good or evil use, so also medicines may be employed legally or 754 illegally. Particular techniques are not in themselves either good or bad; their morality turns on the purpose which they serve. 789 Thus our friend and neighbour, Mwakionde, who was believed to have created four lions, which were roaming the neighbourhood, by placing certain bundles of twigs in the long grass, was regarded as a benefactor; for the lions had attacked neither men nor cattle, and besides adding dignity (*ubusisya*) to the country were killing the wild pig, which had been destroying the gardens. But a certain X— was driven out of Mwaijonde's country because he was alleged to have created leopards which had killed children and cows. 'In 1926 X— was notorious for making leopards. It was said that he got a medicine from Mbaka to make them. His neighbours feared to quarrel with him for in that year leopards infested the whole of Selya, especially the country of Mwaijonde. It was said that if one quarrelled with this man one's child would be killed by leopards the following day. He was notorious. Once he quarrelled with a neighbour, saying: "Your cattle are eating my food." Then the following day the child of that man was taken by a leopard. The chief drove X— out. When they questioned him he denied having familiars ("animals") but the chief said: "Move from my country, for your animals are destroying this country." He said: "Chief, give me the ordeal." The chief refused, saying: "No! get out of my country." So he moved. Now he is back in the country of Mwaijonde. He returned to the place from which he had moved.'[1]

789 Not all medicines believed to cause sickness and death are illegal; there are many retaliatory medicines which are believed only to harm the evil-doer, e.g. the thief, the adulterer, or the eater of stolen food; and the use of these 'medicines of ownership' (*ifikwelelo*) is considered quite legitimate. A man gives his wives medicines to drink (without their knowledge) and then any lover who may sleep with them will, it is said, contract disease in

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[1] In another context this man was spoken of as a witch (*umulosi*), cf. Documents, p. 190.

consequences, though the wives themselves are free. Further the 789
adulterer will pass the disease on to any women he subsequently sleeps with, including his own wives. Gonorrhoea is one of the diseases attributed to this type of medicine. Medicines are also put on houses or fields, for the purpose of bringing upon thieves, or eaters of stolen food, the itch, swollen genitals, dislocation of the knee-cap and thigh, and other ills. One doctor proudly told us of a medicine he possessed which would prevent a thief leaving the field in which he was stealing 'and make him go round and round till daylight, when he is discovered and admits his theft'. Certain protective medicines are thought to cause sorcery to recoil on the sender. But their use is legal; so also is the use of a vengeance magic called 'the horn', *ulupembe* (cf. Document, p. 212), and another type, *ilyepa*, which is held to work only between relatives. These medicines are resorted to when one party to a dispute is dissatisfied with the judgement given in court, and occasionally in cases which have never been taken to court. They are held to harm the person against whom they are directed only if he be guilty. If he is innocent, they recoil on the user. What is illegal is the direct use of medicines to harm an enemy, without any safeguard to ensure that the medicine should only harm the guilty. This is *ubutege*, 'the snaring of men', which we translate here as sorcery.[1] The common techniques of sorcery [754]
are said to be putting medicine in an enemy's path, pricking it into his footprints, or putting it into his food and drink.

In theory the distinction between the legal and illegal use of destructive medicines is clear, but the classification of a particular case depends upon the standpoint of the informant. Just as the supposed victims of 'the breath of men' referred angrily to the attacks of 'witches', so informants whose families were alleged to have suffered from 'the horn', referred to it as 'sorcery' (*ubutege*).

The belief in sorcery and in retaliatory magic is directly 754
parallel to the belief in witchcraft and the 'breath of men', while
the belief in protective medicines is parallel to the belief in the 789
power of 'the defenders'. The distinction between the two sets of beliefs turns, however, not only on the difference between the manipulation of medicines, and the exercise of an innate power,

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[1] In 'An African Morality', *Africa*, Vol. IX (1936) 'sorcery' was used for all destructive magic; I now confine it to the illegal use of destructive medicines.

754 but also on the relationships to which they apply. While witchcraft,
'the breath of men', and the power of 'the defenders' are thought
789 to operate primarily within the village and never beyond the chiefdom, sorcery, retaliatory and protective medicines may operate beyond the village and chiefdom as well as within them. Moreover, while the whole village, led by the headman, joins in defence against witchcraft, protective and retaliatory medicines are used primarily by individuals and families. Medicines of vengeance ('the horn' and *ilyepa*) are directed against kinship groups—members of an agnatic lineage, their spouses, and the children of daughters, are all held to be in danger—not local groups. The next-door neighbours of a man attacked will be safe so long as they are not kinsmen or affines.

The one occasion on which the village or village-section, acting
241 as a group, uses medicines, is at the burning of rubbish heaps in
789 the fields, before planting millet and certain other crops (*vide supra*, pp. 51–4). As we have shown, these medicines are supposed to protect the grain from witches and sorcerers, as well as to increase the yield. The Kukwe argue that the headman who lit the medicated fires must also be the first to taste the food grown on the fields, and he takes it with medicines, but this is not insisted upon by all the Nyakyusa; most commonly it is family groups that are careful to eat protective medicines with the first-fruits from their fields.

754 Envy is what makes men take to sorcery, the Nyakyusa say,
envy of another's riches, or power, or employment. As we have
789 seen, envy is cited as a motive for witchcraft also. But it is not the sole motive. Greed is the primary cause (*vide supra*, p. 92). And while witchcraft can only be used to work off a grudge against a village neighbour, sorcery can be used against anyone. Like witchcraft, the effects of 'the breath of men' are said to be confined to the village. Moreover 'the breath' can only operate against a known sinner—it is the murmuring of neighbours about an individual which causes him to sicken; whereas most retaliatory medicines work against unknown persons, discovering the thief, adulterer, or sorcerer, as well as punishing him. As elsewhere in Africa, the use of sorcery and retaliatory medicines is said to be almost entirely confined to men, though women are often named as witches. In short, the situations in which sorcery and medicines of retaliation are used overlap at one or two points with those in

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which witchcraft and 'the breath of men' operate, but their 789
supposed fields of action are relatively distinct.

In the past, the punishment for sorcery was death with torture 754
by impaling, not merely confiscation of property and banishment.
Proof of the practice of sorcery depended upon the evidence of 683
the doctor who had supplied the medicine (who was not regarded as implicated in the crime) and upon the *umwafi* ordeal. The Nyakyusa insist that the practice of sorcery was formerly rare, and that it has increased enormously, much more than the practice of witchcraft. This belief is to be related to two facts. First, Nyakyusa co-operate much more than they formerly did with people who live in different villages. The clerks who work together in Government offices, and who have a fearsome reputation as sorcerers, do not necessarily live in the same village; and being apart at night when the witches fly, they cannot be supposed to bewitch one another. But there is frequent occasion for friction between them and therefore a standing temptation to employ sorcery. So also in other types of employment, in trade and on journeys, individuals are frequently in contact with men of different villages. Secondly, belief in sorcery is felt to be compatible with the acceptance of a scientific explanation of causes of disease in a way that belief in witchcraft is not. *Ubutege* is commonly translated as 'poisoning' by those who speak English, whether the medicine is or is not put into food or drink, or whether it is supposed to affect all who eat it or only the individual against whom it is directed. All types of sorcery tend to be rationalized as 'poisoning'; and many educated Nyakyusa who deny the reality of witchcraft admit to a lively fear of sorcerers.

As the table on pp. 198–213 shows, however, accusations of 754
witchcraft are still much more common than accusations of sorcery in the community as a whole. We heard of thirty-eight cases of supposed witchcraft to eleven of sorcery, and there was no reason to think that our friends were more likely to mention the one type of case than the other.

4. *The age-village and Christianity*

Since common action against witches, and to punish trans- 195
gressors through 'the breath of men', is one of the primary func- 754
tions of an age-village, what happens in a Christian village, or 184

754 akin to witchcraft and distinct from the power of senior relatives is used to punish wrong-doers and to protect[1] the village from witches, and in the belief that village headmen are foremost among 'the defenders'.

626 •789 The closest parallel to the Nyakyusa concept of 'the breath of men' of which we have evidence in Africa is the belief in the 'conditional curse' among the Meru, Embu, and Kikuyu people. Lambert shows that the main sanction enforcing the judgement of the Council of Elders among the Meru people was the belief that its curse brought misfortune, and he was told in Embu that the Warriors' Council has a similar power over warriors.[2] Kenyatta shows that among the Kikuyu the conditional curse was used to protect beacons, to enforce the judgement of the Council of Elders, and to guard against bribery.[3] As we have seen, the Nyakyusa of the plain also use a word *ikigune*, which is best translated as 'the curse', when the people of the hills use the phrase 'the breath of men' (*vide supra*, p. 101), and whatever phrase is used the implication is that misfortune comes from the shocked astonishment and the anger of neighbours (or father's neighbours) which has been expressed in 'murmuring'. In the Nyakyusa view a formal cursing is not necessary to bring down misfortune, but the anger must be *expressed* (*vide supra*, p. 106). A belief in the legitimate exercise of mystical power by contemporaries or seniors to punish non-relatives thus appears in four societies with highly developed age-organizations, and further field-work may show that the two are always coincident.

626 However that may be, the belief in 'the curse' (or 'the breath of men') among the Nyakyusa is shaped by the fact that villages are occupied by age-sets. The social function of 'the breath of men' in a Nyakyusa age-village is strictly parallel to that of the mystical power of senior relatives in a kinship village. Where, as among most African peoples, the neighbours are kinsmen, no distinction is made between the mystical effects of the legitimate

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[1] There are indications that the power of witchcraft is thought sometimes to be used for defence among the Thonga (Junod, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 510, 516), and the Azande (Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., pp. 129-30) but the idea does not apparently bulk large, and there is no suggestion of a similar power being used to punish wrong-doers.

[2] H. E. Lambert, *The Use of Indigenous Authorities in Tribal Administration* (Communications from the School of African Studies, University of Cape Town), pp. 9-10, 14-15.

[3] J. Kenyatta, op. cit., pp. 39-40, 221-2.

anger of neighbours on the one hand, and of kinsmen on the other. 626

The idea that a Nyakyusa village headman has the mystical 622
power called *amanga*, and leads the attacks of justly enraged 789 ●
neighbours, gives him a position in his village comparable to that of the headman who, among many African peoples, is the senior 754
kinsman in his village. Each has mystical power over the members of his village, and the fact that the Nyakyusa headman's power is derived from 'a python in the stomach', and operates like witchcraft, while the power of a senior kinsman derives from his birth, and operates through the shades, makes relatively little difference to the relations of the village headman with his people.

The Nyakyusa system is peculiar in that the village headman is foremost as the discoverer of, and defender against, witches; he combines the functions fulfilled elsewhere by the village headman and the witch-doctor. The protection which kinship villages in other African cultures seek on the one hand from their ancestors, and on the other from the witch-doctor,[1] the Nyakyusa look for from their village headmen. Doctors who claim to discover witches, and provide medicines for protection against them, exist in Nyakyusa society; some, at least, of them are spoken of as having *amanga*—the same mystical power as the headmen have—through which they are enabled to see and fight the witches; but witch-doctors play a much smaller part than they do among the Azande or the Pondo; in the battle against witches they are quite overshadowed by the village headmen. Defence against witchcraft is a village affair, and the foremost 'defenders' (*abamanga*) are the political authorities. Village rituals directed to the ancestors are conspicuously absent among the Nyakyusa, and our hypothesis is that this absence, together with the belief that the 'python power' of village headmen and others is used to punish wrong-doers and defend the innocent within their village, is dependent upon the age-village organization, in which neighbours are not kinsmen and the position of village headman is not hereditary.

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[1] cf. Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., pp. [illegible]; Junod, op. cit., pp. [illegible]. The Thonga 'magician' is also believed to fly and know the witches, because he shares their power.

2. THE 'COMING OUT' (*UBUSOKA*)

Mwaikambo (clerk and son of a chief).[1]

621 622 643 'The village headmen begin to talk among themselves, saying: "Our sons have grown up, should we not establish them?" So they go to tell the chief, saying: "Our sons have grown up, let us show them to the country." Two chiefs always "come out". We call them the senior and the junior. It is an old custom which is still followed that two chiefs should "come out".

● [789] 'So the village headmen seek a doctor to make them a medicine horn and treat the tails of chieftainship with medicine. The village headmen take council together and choose two senior headmen to "come out" with the chiefs. These senior headmen drink medicine (*embondanya*) with the chiefs.

'When many people, together with the two young chiefs, have come together the doctor gives powdered medicine (*embondanya*) to the chiefs and the senior headman chosen for each chief. They give a spear of chieftainship, and a horn, and tail to each of the men chosen as senior headmen—one for each chief. Each senior headman then binds the horn to the blade of the spear, and standing with his own chief and many men and women, raises the spear to the sky. The women trill and each party goes to its place of "coming out" on the pasturage. [535] Each chief, with his followers, goes to his own place. The men dance; sometimes they have drums, sometimes not.

[572] 'Then when each party has reached it own place they make fire with fire sticks. The chief just simulates the action of fire-making then his senior headman takes the sticks and makes fire by friction. When they have built the shelters for sleeping in they warm themselves at the fire they have made; they do not take fire from the houses of men. If there are many of them then there will be three or four shelters, if few, then only one shelter. The men and their chief who has "come out" sleep in these shelters and enjoy themselves together (*ukwangala*). The first day they kill two head of cattle. Also they plant "the tree of coming out" (*umpiki gwa busoka*) which is called *ulupanda*. They plant it with a man who has come out previously, a man of their fathers' generation, he begins to plant, then he explains to them what to do, saying "plant", then the new senior headman plants it.

'While they sleep in these shelters with their cattle, they eat food which they take from their fathers, bananas, and milk, and other food.

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[1] For a note on conspicuous informants see p. vi.

From time to time their father, the chief, gives them a bull to kill. During the "coming out" food is very plentiful. If people pass on the road they honour them and give them food, and make love to them that they may build there. They remain in their shelters, they do not go about much. If the chief is stingy they teach him a lesson by taking bananas; they say: "Know that we are important people, we are those who have 'come out' and we are your parents." Later on they play drums—I think only in recent years. And the village headmen seize a woman, the daughter of a commoner, as a wife for the chief.

'The horn is the luck of the chiefs, that many people may come to build. Binding the horn to the blade of the spear is to show that the chief is one who has "come out" (*unsoka*); it is as if he were carried aloft (*i.e.* "chaired")[1]. We show his greatness ("seniority") to people, then we trill. 643 778 643

'The fire made with fire sticks is to symbolize the new chieftainship. We do not take the old fire of the old men. [572]

'The medicine is to make the chief heavy (*nsito*), that it may be apparent that he is a chief. [764]

'The *ulupando* tree is a memorial of the "coming out", that men may come and say: "So and so planted this tree when he came out." Some say it is to show the power (*amaka*) of the chief, because if it does not grow it is said that his chieftainship will perhaps not flourish; then they will say: "Let us move and plant elsewhere." It is said that the spear of chieftainship is to fight battles; it is strength, manhood; it is treated with medicines.

'The tails are those with which battles are fought. When men go to war the senior headman grasps the tail. If the tail does not lead them well they return from the fight. It, also, they treat with medicines.' [778]

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[1] A bride at a puberty-marriage ritual is carried about shoulder high.

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(c) 'The Curse' of Christians

No.	Category of Sufferer	Misfortune	Alleged sin	Category of individual or group believed to have called down a curse
1	Ex-schoolboy	Cannot get a job	Disobeyed his Nyakyusa teacher	Teacher
2	Ex schoolboy	Dismissed from government job. Reason unknown. Unemployed	Sent to boarding school with mission money, then refused to work for mission. Later married 12 wives. He also stole	The congregation
3	Teacher, son of elder	Eaten by a crocodile (seven years after sinning)	Committed adultery with daughter of chief. Spoke against the church	The congregation
4	Son of elder	Died of venereal disease	Committed adultery	The congregation
5	Pagan man	Died	Refused food to travelling Christian elder	The elder
6	Mohammedan man	Cut his leg with his hoe	Hoed on Sunday	Two Christian men
7	Ex-schoolboy	Always lost his job though clever and good English-speaker. Now a fisherman and 'talks English to the fish'	Not known	European missionary
8	Ex-boarding schoolboy	Cannot get a job. 'Just hoeing like uneducated people'	Eloped with a girl betrothed to a fellow Christian	European missionary
9	Christian woman	Paralysed for sixteen years	Took an unfair share of meat at feasts	Christian neighbours
10	Man-servant of missionary	Married several times. Each time wife died	Dressed in missionary's clothes and sat at table pretending to write with his pen	European missionary
11	Rich man	Property disappeared	Caught with a woman and denied having committed adultery	European missionary (said to have uttered a conditional curse: 'If you are lying all your property will disappear')
12	Woman	Became a wanderer	Stole things from loft of mother-in-law's hut. Disobeyed husband and complained of him to neighbours. Asked for divorce	European missionary
13	Young man, newly married	Did not beget a child	Did not make a wedding feast for his neighbours in Christian village	Christian neighbours (complaining they had eaten no meat). Young man's pagan 'mothers' inquired of diviner and this was the diagnosis

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No.	Category of victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accuser	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case
1	Chief	'People'	Chief and one of his village headmen	Other chiefdoms	Made chief ill	Envy of chief having a court. Illness of chief.		
2	Conquered chief	Conquering chief (pre-European)		Different villages but same country (after the conquest)	Conquered had killed conqueror by sorcery	Mwamakula had taken Mwaseba's country. Death of conqueror		
3	Christian who became very popular by healing them. People said he would 'kill' the position of the accused because of his popularity	Senior village headman X		Same village	X sought medicine to work sorcery against the Christian	X envied popularity of new-comer. He was overheard by neighbours saying he would work sorcery. Serious illness of Christian followed		
4	Child of F.	Classificatory brother of F.	F., father of victim	Different chiefdoms		Quarrel over inheritance of cattle. F's brother claimed cows from him. Case went to court of defendant's chief. Decided in his favour		
5	Man (Mwampiki) and his wife	Not specified	Son of deceased ([illegible])			Death of Mwampiki and his wife	Autopsy on Mwampiki. Found a powder, thought to be sorcery medicine, in his stomach. No autopsy on wife but 'know that she died from the same disease'	Family drank purgative medicine
6	3 wives of X. Sister of X. 1 married daughter and another child. Husband of married daughter					All died within a short time of one another. Sorcery spread through autopsies	Autopsies	Family drank medicines provided by a doctor and the illness ceased

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(d) *Sorcery (Ubutege)*—contd.

MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—contd.

No.	Category of victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Special relationship of victim and accuser	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case
7	Daughter of A. Son and daughter of A's full brother B	A accused X, his parallel cousin (child of A's father's brother). X accused A	A, father and brother of victims		Use of sorcery against one another	Junior brother's son wanted inheritance divided. Elder brother's son (A) did not. This was followed by illness of victims	Suggested by doctor that trouble due to sorcery or to anger of ancestors over family quarrel	Open discussion of quarrel (ukupepeta). Drank medicine against sorcery. Also prayer to ancestors
8	Child of neighbour B	Man X	Neighbour B.	Same village	Sent his leopard to kill the child	Child killed by leopard on day after X had quarrelled with accuser B, saying B's cattle were eating his crops	X asked for ordeal. This refused	X driven out of country by chief. Later returned
9	Foreman and clerk A, very lucky in striking gold and favourite of the employer	Fellow clerk B.		Same camp	B accused of killing A by sorcery	A died suddenly at his forge. B was very jealous of A's wealth, and had spoken in secret of his desire to kill A by sorcery, saying 'may he die at his house'		
10	Wife of village headman					Death	Autopsy. Symptoms of sorcery found	
11	Man who had run off with another's wife	Injured husband	Victim	Victim on Lupa. Injured husband in Ichage (200 miles distant)	Husband blowing medicines at the seducer of his wife (i.e. working sorcery—ubutege). The husband's friends might have classed this as vengeance-magic)	Continued illness of victim	Divination by a doctor	Victim treated with medicines. Moved to another house. He finally recovered, but has been ill

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(d) *Vengeance Magic (Chapamba—the Horn)*

MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—*contd.*

No.	Category of Victim	Category of accused	Category of accuser	Spatial relationship of victim and accused	Charge	Grounds of suspicion	Investigation	Upshot of case
1	[illegible]	[illegible]			Accused used the horn. [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
2	1. [illegible] 2. [illegible]	Husband of woman [illegible]	Relatives of deceased woman		Accused used the horn. [illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]
3	Child of A and children of other wives of A's husband	Co-wife B.	A, mother of victim	Same [illegible]	B used the horn	[illegible]		[illegible]
4	Man C. and woman D. with whom he had eloped	Man A who [illegible] the woman D	Man B, brother of deceased C	Different [illegible]	A used the horn	[illegible]		[illegible]

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]			[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

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21. WITCHCRAFT AND LUST FOR MEAT AND MILK

Mwaisumo (clerk).

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'Some "defenders" (*abamanga*), when they smell something delicious in the house of a relative or a close friend, say: "The meat (if it's meat) smells nice, give me a little to eat, I am a witch, the pythons will come up and carry me off to throttle someone." This can only be said (and it is said quite seriously) in the house of a relative or great friend because in no other house can a man ask for meat. Shame prevents him. People think a man who asks for food is a fool.

'Some people, when they have eaten a little and finished, say: "Give me a little more, if we witches are grudged food the pythons come up!" It is said that throttling is in order to eat delicious food (*abapita ku kulya ifinofu*). The witches say human flesh is delicious, and the milk of cows is also delicious.

Some people will eat cooked food which has been left over-night; others refuse it, and when asked why, say: "It is forbidden for us witches to eat cooked food which has stood over-night." I have heard this said often. "The defenders" say it spoils their pythons. Chiefs do not eat kept food either; it is said to spoil their *ifingila* medicine. People say that it is bad for chiefs or witches or "defenders" to eat left-over food because it has been touched by the ancestors at night. This is often said by "defenders" as well as others.'

15. THE ASSOCIATIONS OF *UKULOGA* AND *UKUPITA*

Mwaisumo (clerk).

"Ukuloga is like ukupita but not the same. It is said that when someone is angry with you and has drunk a medicine to give him power to bewitch (*amoke ya kuloga*), he greets you and the word alone has power to bring illness. You will be very ill. 789 754

"It is said that when a woman is pregnant and walks round a person who has many medicines, one of them being a medicine *akuloga*, she will have a miscarriage. There is no case (against the owner of the medicines). 843

"It is said that when the owner of pythons, or the owner of medicines, passes when food has been spread out to dry, the food will disappear. He bewitches it (*akuloga*). It is as if he hankered after the food in his heart; it disappears and becomes less. When a python man ("he of pythons")—they speak much of python men, little of medicine men—passes cattle and hankers after milk, he bewitches the milk (*akuloga*). It disappears. He does not throttle (*akupita*) the cattle; no, the milk just disappears.

"It is forbidden to say of a child that it is beautiful. It is all right to a close friend but not among ordinary people. To do so is to bewitch (*akuloga*) the child. The child will fall ill. It is forbidden to say of a cow that its udder is big. If the owner hears he says: "You are bewitching it" (*akuloga*), meaning the milk will disappear. Everyone fears to admire children or cows in this way; if such a sign is followed by sickness or failure of milk people swear at the man who has expressed admiration, but do not bring a case.

"The work of pythons is especially to steal away the milk, to throttle (*akupita*). It is reported that some say: "I am a witch, but I have not got a python. I do not throttle the cows." They might mean they "eat" people but do not steal milk."

Kalinga (pagan man).

"Ukupita is to throttle (with hands round the throat)." 789

In reply to a question as to the further meanings of the word *ukupita*, Kalinga said: "When my relatives are there I say: "Have you kupita with my wife?" But when we are alone I say: "Did you sleep with my wife?" or "Did you have intercourse with her (*gwakigwa* 754 196

784 754 146 myself?" We only liken intercourse and witchcraft; witchcraft is quite different. When a woman is an adulteress I say: "You are a witch (umbafwi); you kill me," but it is just a metaphor (*fyo fifwanie*). Adultery involves paying for cattle for all of us; it differs from witchcraft. And when I ask a man: "Why, why did you [illegible] with my wife?" that means: "You are like a witch." It is just a metaphor. But (he volunteered), if I catch an adulterer with my wife, even if he has practised coitus interruptus, I am angry and kill him from jealousy, though I do not suffer from diarrhoea."

837 153 An adulteress is spoken of as an umbafwi 'because she brings illness upon her husband' by her adultery, if intercourse is complete, but not, it is thought, if coitus interruptus is practised. The illness commonly thought to be caused by a wife's adultery is diarrhoea.

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woman has been angry with her husband, and perhaps quarrelled with him, and has sworn at her husband by "the things" (i.e. the sex organs) of his mother, or perhaps his father, the child she bears will fall sick with ingoto. It becomes very thin and does not grow. The disease is recognized when a child is very ill from infancy, and it is very thin but does not die. Then they say it is ingoto. Sometimes they inquire of a diviner and the diviner reveals that it is ill of ingoto. [754]

"I remember a certain woman who was married to a man, [illegible]. This man had married two wives, and she of whom I speak was the third. This woman was very proud ([illegible] fijo) and was constantly quarrelling with her husband and her co-wives. When she quarrelled with her husband he got angry and beat her. Then she swore at him horribly, about "the things" of his mother or father. She said: "You! So and so of your father! So and so of your mother!" Then this woman bore a girl child and when it had grown a little it became very ill. It was very ill for a whole year. When it began to recover she quarrelled again with her husband and swore at him insultingly, and the child got ill again. So her husband (the father of the child) and she went to inquire of a diviner. The divination revealed ingoto. It said: "Your wife has sworn at you about the things of your mother when you were quarrelling." When they got home the husband drove his wife away, saying: "Go to your father!" When she got home the woman told her father everything and he took millet and gave it to her to make beer with which to pay. So she brewed beer and brought it to her husband, saying: "I did wrong, my husband." Her husband called his fellows and they all drank the beer and expressed their anger ([illegible]) and said: "May the child recover and grow well!" [578] [787]

"This happened when I was 13 or 14 years old. The girl (who was ill) is still alive; her body shows signs of not having grown properly.

"The disease comes from "the breath of men" because these insults were made publicly and others heard them. I do not think anything would happen if the insults were private, I am not sure."

A curse of neighbours for neglect of rituals.
[illegible] (young Christian man).

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"If I do not do the (death) ritual properly for my father the death of my children is due to the curse against me, the dispute with relatives and the curse of people—non-relatives ([illegible], [illegible]).

"Sometimes the villagers ([illegible]) bind a man's loins so that he cannot beget children with his wife. They are both sterile. Husbandada, the doctor in Selya, is a case of this. He had quarrelled with his elder brother and did not come to bury him. Later he came and killed a cow, but did not tell the men of the village (*amafumu*) properly, and they were angry, and so for the last ten years he has had no child. His wives do not conceive at all. That is due to the curse of men (*ikigune kya bandu*)." 781 626 842

A curse for 'soiling a man'.
Angombwike (young Christian man).

Angombwike cited a case of sterility attributed to *ikigune* because a woman had 'soiled' a man. 781 626 842

"She had run away three times with X. Finally her husband forced X to eat her filth and drink her urine. X was very ill but recovered. She bore no further children on her return to her husband. She went to Lyandelelo (the informant's mother) for medicine but the latter said she could not help as it was *ikigune*. Her neighbours were shocked because she had "soiled the child of someone". Also the neighbours of X's father were shocked. Their "breath" takes effect because she visits frequently in their village, going to see a grandparent. They say: "This is the woman who soiled our child.""

N.B.—It is the woman who is held to have suffered, not her husband or X.

A curse due to incest.
[illegible] (young Christian man).

"A, son of B (a chief?), made love to his father's sister X. X's husband, C, had married (*ukukwa*) a full sister, Y, of A. A lay with X. A had syphilis and X and her husband C both fell sick of it. C asked X where the disease came from. She accused A. C complained to B. B was very angry and all men were astonished at it. It is forbidden. How could he have intercourse with his mother, the sister of his father! B took four of A's cows and gave them to C. People cursed (*ukuguna*) A, who was very ill for two years. His eye came out of its socket. He went to a mission hospital. 781 626 835

"The villagers (*amafumu*) gathered at B's and said: "This sickness of A is because of that case of his when he lay with X. It is because of that he is sick." So B sent to A and told him to bring four cows, which he did. B called his people and brothers and sisters and said: "Bless my child." They swore and swore at him, and they caught hold of the woman and swore, saying: "How did you agree to sleep with your

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child? You have both sinned greatly." Then they killed the cows and ate them. I was there. Very quickly A recovered and his eye is all right now.'

A curse on a senior village headman due to
the anger of a junior village headman.
Mwandisho (Pagan man).

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'A young chief, Mwaisemale, called his men to hoe a road at the order of the Government. The third village headman of the country and his men refused to come, saying: "Not we, we have been once already", and they beat Mwaisemale's messenger. So Mwaisemale was very angry, and reported the village headman to his father, who was also very angry and told the headman and all his men (a very big age-village) to move to another chief. And the senior headman agreed, saying: "Indeed, my junior is a proud fellow. Let them go." So they all went to the country of Mwansasu.

'Now the senior headman has fallen ill with the "breath of men". He is unable to walk. The diviner said his illness was due to "the breath" of his junior colleague—he had been cursed because he is reputed to be the favourite of the chief. He was very ill and moved to Kasuma's country where he has begun to recover.

'After being away for a year the third headman brought a cow to pay to the chief (Mwakabobela). The chief refused it, saying: "No, indeed, my country is quarrelsome. Perhaps you think it was you who built it? I do not wish that you should return. Go with your cow." Some of the third village headman's men came back and then Mwakabobela allowed to build, but he said that he would never let the banished headman back. Many men stayed with their headman and refused to return until he did. Only two years ago (1937) the headman brought two cows to Mwakabobela who forgave him on the condition that he found something to take to the senior headman, who was ill, to fetch him back from Kasuma's country. So the third headman fetched his senior with a huge bull. They came back with it and killed it and drank much beer and made friends. Most of the beer was provided by the third headman, who had spent two years in exile, but some by the senior.

'The mystical power (*amanga*) of the third headman and his men was able to reach the senior headman because a whole village had moved, but had a single man moved he would not have been able to send "breath" to another country, because when "the defenders" come at night in the power of *amanga* (*amanga gabo*) the owners of the country who remain in it ask them: "Where are you going?" and

1; Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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they reply: "We are just walking about in our country, to our homes", 788
and the owners of the country do not drive them away; but of a single 626
man they ask: "Why are you walking about here?" and they drive him off.'

'The breath of men' and witchcraft.
Mwambapata (Senior village headman).

' "The breath of men" (embepo sya bandu) and witchcraft (ubulosi) go 788
together. If all the members of a village murmur that a certain man is 784
evil then the words of the innocent (abelu) have no weight, no strength 626
at all, but those of the heavy ones (abasito) have. It is the heavy ones who carry that breath into his body in dreams, they chastise him, but the innocent just talk and murmur against him, that is all.'

Question: 'Then that breath comes from the pythons inside them?'

Mwambapata: 'Yes, that is where it comes from, it is one with witchcraft, identical. Sometimes they just chastised him a little, he did not die, but just fell sick; and in such a case there was never any drinking of *umwafi*; if he killed a beast for them they would pray (ukwipuna) and pray, they would let out all their anger, saying: "Certainly we were angry, it was us, but now it is all over." Then life came back to him and he recovered. That is the curse (ikigune).

'But sometimes they would kill him—and then they had to drink *umwafi* . . . if a man died and they found spear-marks, wounds, in his entrails the chief would get angry and say: "You have killed your fellow, drink the *umwafi*." So then the *umwafi* would convict one of witchcraft and he would be expelled from the country. For we said: "It is forbidden to kill a man." We others were afraid, although we had disliked the victim ourselves, we feared that at some later time the witch would kill us.'

23. RITUAL OF RECONCILIATION

Mwakirende (doctor, brother of a chief).

789 626 783 "If my son has sworn at me, my friends in the village are angry and say: "Why has our child sworn at his father?" Then the youth falls ill, and people say: "It is the curse (ikigune). It was we who were angry, because he swore at our fellow." Then he seeks something with which to pay—perhaps a bull or cow. If I, the father, am a rich man I brew beer for the people coming to instruct my child and to say: "It was we who were angry, young man, because you swore at your father. Now may you recover!" While they are drinking the beer they kill the bull, which he found, and eat it."

Mwambolile (pagan man).

"A junior relative who has wronged a senior and later wishes to make friends has to satisfy not only him but his neighbours. For example: A man X seduced a widow of his father who was regarded as the property of his senior half-brother, Y, the heir. (She was not Y's wife, because she was a sister of his mother, but given to deceased's younger half-brother.) Later X paid Y one cow as a fine "for seducing his mother". Then X brought him a bull to re-unite the family and make friends, saying: "Indeed, I wronged you, my father." Y said: "If you wish to make friends again you must also bring a cow for the village to eat, so that all shall know that I am satisfied." X brought a heifer calf which was eaten by the village."

There was no mention of sickness in this case.

121 object or action which it is felt to resemble. The images men use,
811 the things they feel to be alike, are determined in a general way by the form of the society, and Nyakyusa images are in terms of bananas, staple grains, cattle, smithing on a primitive forge, lineage organization and so on. There are cultural idioms, accepted forms of expression, which frequently recur, but the particular associations are not predictable any more than the associations made by a poet in our own society—the priest and the doctor are indeed in one aspect poets.

771 The essence of Nyakyusa ritual is that things which are felt to
813 be alike are taken as causally connected. Both positive actions and
791 avoidances or taboos are based on the assumption that like objects or actions react on one another. This was clearly recognized by an informant who remarked: 'avoidances come from resemblances.' The basis is invariably the *feeling* of likeness, but mixed up with this there is often exact observation, as in the following taboo. The husband of a pregnant woman may not hunt big game because, it is said, they will be unusually fierce and attack him particularly. The association made is between a pregnant woman who is irritable, 'fierce' (*ukali*), and the game which is fierce. The husband is identified with his wife, 'and', the Nyakyusa say, 'lions always attack a cow in calf'. Sometimes like things are felt to be antagonistic, as 'seed in the belly' and seed in the ground, and sometimes sympathetic. Sometimes like is thought to produce like—a pregnant woman is forbidden to sit close to someone lest she bear twins—and sometimes men mime a misfortune as a prophylactic against it.

781 The rituals are magical in the sense that efficacy is held to lie in
591 the particular material form,[1] but they vary in detail with the
771 cultural group, just as the language does.[2] The rituals of the Lake-shore plain in Tanganyika (BuNgonde) and of Selya are almost identical, but those of the Kukwe, the Lugulu, the Saku, the Ndali, the Penja, and the people of Ngonde in Nyasaland are all somewhat different. Differences in ritual are directly connected by the people themselves with differences in lineage, and the principle is maintained that every individual follows the ritual of his or her father's lineage, though a married woman will follow that of her

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[1] For a discussion of this characteristic of magic cf. G. & M. Wilson, *The Analysis of Social Change* (1945), pp. 72-3, 88-95.

[2] An account of the various cultural groups included under Nyakyusa, and of related peoples, is given in *Good Company*, pp. 1-3.

husband when at her husband's home. Kakuso, a doctor, explained: 'The ritual for a woman is that of her husband's group, always. My mother was Lugulu, but at her death we did the Kukwe ritual. If my daughter marries a Sangu and dies, they will do the Sangu ritual; she has moved.' We attended a death ritual which was actually performed in two slightly different ways by two sets of mourners. A member of a Sangu family, long established in Selya, had died; sons and daughters of the family performed what was said to be the Sangu ritual, but the children of daughters married to Selya men performed the Selya ritual. Whether the Sangu ritual is really as similar to the Selya ritual as this celebration suggests is doubtful—it seems unlikely, since the Sangu are very different from the Nyakyusa in other respects and their languages are not mutually intelligible—but some sort of adjustment had been made by this foreign family living in Selya and by others in a like position. Our informants expected to find parallels to the events of their own rituals in the rituals of neighbouring groups, and they expected also to find minor differences. Any variations are explained by the phrase 'that is the custom in their lineage', and the officiant is the final arbitrator as to what is correct. A number of informants also pointed out that the staple foods were used in the death ritual and that these varied somewhat with the area. 'We use the principal food of the country—it differs with different people. The Kisi and Ngonde (of Nyasaland) use fish, the Ndali use groats, we Nyakyusa cannot use rice but the Swahili would. Our food is bananas.[1] The pumpkin, which we also use, is a very old vegetable and is still much eaten; it is one of the best vegetables.' The Sangu use millet porridge, the Penja maize and beans. 787 (§4 77)

In this book are described the rituals of the main cultural groups of the Nyakyusa—those of the people of Selya and Masoko and the Lake-shore plain (MuNgonde)[2] which are similar, and those of the Kukwe which are different, and a few references are made to other variations. The variations are suggestive, for though the details differ, the values and attitudes expressed are identical. There are also minor differences between families of the same cultural group, and in the practice of different officiants, but their (2.3 §4 77)

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[1] The Nyakyusa use *amakili* as a general word for plantains and bananas, though this is properly one variety of plantain. 'Bananas' is used here to include all varieties of bananas and plantains.

[2] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 6.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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identification of the mourners with the corpse and the separation 764 of the shade from both of them. 'What they do to the participants 765 they do to the deceased. . . . If they are not cleansed he is still 766 muddy. . . . We throw away the corpse, the contamination of death, into the river . . . we drive the shade away off our bodies to join his fellows . . . we separate the corpse and the shade.' Thirdly, bringing back the shade as a beneficent spirit into the house. 'In the ritual we tell the shade to go away and join his fellows, and then to come back with them and warm himself by the fire in our house. . . . At first the shade is in our bodies, we cast him out . . . at first it is as if we were still holding the corpse in our arms, but we throw the corpse away into the river . . . the shade we bring back into our house.'

Fourthly, a miming of the actions of a madman in eating excrement as a prophylactic against behaviour of that sort. The dead, if not separated from the living, bring madness upon them, and simulating madness is a protection against it.

Fifthly, the corpse and faeces are identified. 'The corpse is filth, it is excrement. And so when a madman for whom they have not performed the ritual eats filth that is the corpse, he is still holding it, they have not done the ritual for him.'

Sixthly, the shades are identified with semen and seeds and their control over potency and fertility is recognized. The Nyakyusa [illegible] think that they are always present in sexual intercourse, and symbols of sexual intercourse are interpreted as a means of driving out the shade from the participants' bodies.

Seventhly, 'the food which he loved' is symbolically 'given to the shade' of the man who has just died and he is urged to be satisfied: 'You, shade, do not think there was little food at your ritual. . . . The food which we have eaten you have eaten . . . do not create hunger.'

Eighthly, the shade is acknowledged as a kinsman by eating with him food and beer mixed with *ikipiki*—the symbol of agnatic kinship—before he is driven away.

Lastly, a dead man is formally replaced by his heir, a woman by her sister or her brother's daughter.

These conceptions are expressed in the following texts which are given as they were recorded by Godfrey Wilson. No attempt has [2.6] been made to summarize Kasitile's or Mwaisumo's arguments, but the statements made during numerous sessions have been placed in sequence, and are separated only by dots.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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for the ritual. We think that when she has slept with her new husband she is full ([illegible]) and if she gives us food it will make us ill. 764 537

[illegible]: The new husband gives us relatives a disease by impregnating the girl, he who is no relative of ours, the new husband. [illegible] is an illness. [759]

8. *Kakune's interpretation.* (Recorded by G. W.)

KAKUNE: Yes, if we do not perform the ritual the children run mad. They speak foolishly and deliriously, they run about wildly wearing leaves, they eat filth. But they do not fight with their fellows—that is what those do who have the madness of Kyala. It is these of whom we say: 'Perhaps Kyala loved them.' 768

QUESTION: Why the first washing?

KAKUNE: That is to get rid of the dirtiness, the filth, for they held the corpse in their hands. They do not eat the ritual food until they have washed.

QUESTION: Why the eating of porridge?

KAKUNE: Because of the tears we have wept. We have mourned him; now let us eat and strengthen our bodies again.

QUESTION: Why are beans thrown into the pot in the evening?

KAKUNE: These beans, which we throw into the pot, saying: 'This is my father's death', are an ending of the ritual. They remain all night in the house after they have been cooked, and the shades come and eat. In the morning the doctor [*unganga*, i.e. the officiant] washes us again with powdered medicine and we eat the beans and finish them. We use beans in the ritual for that is the food which our father hoed. We think: 'Our father has died, he will never hoe for us again', and so we say: 'This is the death of my father.' So then the shade of our father comes at night and tastes the food and says to us: 'I, your father, have died, you have mourned for me; live you yet awhile, do not come quickly to death; and may you hoe plenty of food and have no hunger.' If we leave out this ritual with the beans the fertility of our gardens disappears and we have great hunger, we eat nothing.

QUESTION: Why the circling to the harp and crumbling oil-seeds?

KAKUNE: The ointment (made from the oil-seeds) is to finish the ritual. The song (*[illegible]*) is to say good-bye, to the shade, it means 'farewell', it is to drive him away. We circle round because our father was an active man, he walked round among his friends, he danced; that is why we circle round the fire. [In Kakune's family they do not cry the war dance of triumph, they only dance to the harp.]

QUESTION: Why the pebbles? [I told him what [illegible] had said and he agreed heartily.]

KAKUNE: Yes, that's it! We throw them away, this means 'We have driven you away now.'

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Kukwe

76 the's stem of bananas symbolizing that we may eat other people's food, we have finished the ritual. Because during the ritual those who have not completed it eat apart. If they eat ordinarily we say of them: 'You so-and-so, you!' And at the last beer of the death ritual, when they have mixed the beer, we . . . say to the women: 'Where will you go?' 'We will find his cattle.' 'Very well.' Then we drink. But if the widows agree, according to custom, then we give them to our comrades, saying: 'These are your wives.' He sleeps with them in the house and we drink.

QUESTION: What does circling with the harp mean?

NSUSA: We spoke of that before. He who plays the harp is just someone who makes us go in line, they have finished him, he was branded even. He says: 'Let me help my friend and play the harp for him and make him circle round.'

QUESTION: And what does the stamping dance ([illegible]) mean?

[77] NSUSA: It is to drive away sickness, to drive him away, to say: 'Go away with your sickness'.

QUESTION: But how exactly?

NSUSA: Because he who has died trampled the ground long ago when his father died, and we trample now that he has died, and his father trampled for his grandfather, and his grandfather for an ancestor. It means: 'We have finished with you, go away.' And at the bathing we put pebbles between our fingers and let them fall into the stream. . . [He performed a dramatic pantomime of sitting down in the water and falling first one way and then the other, and pushing his hands away so that they let the stones fall out. As he let them fall he said: 'We have driven you away, we have finished with you!'] . . .

QUESTION: Why did [illegible] old women during the circling round?

NSUSA AND [illegible]: We do not do it, we differ in our rituals. But we do the scattering of the banana branch and throwing things in the pot at the fire, and hitting the ground and saying: '[illegible], [illegible].'

QUESTION: Why?

NSUSA AND [illegible]: Because if we don't do it our children run into the pasturage and make balls of rubbish ([illegible]) and eat; then they become weak and foolish; but if we perform the ritual then they are fine children.

QUESTION: Why the throwing into the pot?

NSUSA AND [illegible]: It means that we have finished with him [with a gesture of throwing away].

QUESTION: Why the washing at first?

[illegible]: If we do not wash them they become weak and foolish, so we seize them and wash them and give them porridge, and then they recover. If we leave them they go off to the rubbish heap and make dirt ([illegible]); they take the dirt from the rubbish heap, they

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Selya, [illegible]

827
front. See, the man ejects semen! Does it not go inside? The woman 836
becomes heavy and overcomes the bride.'

Even after she has been treated, the bride avoids any close contact 876
with those who are 'heavy'; in particular they are excluded 833
from her hut. Her own mother 'does not sleep with the father at all from the time the girl grows up until she goes to her husband, and begins intercourse with him. It is taboo. She says to her husband: "See, I am keeping my child company."' But the 'play' of her companions does not matter, for intercourse *inter crura* does not make anyone heavy; it is the semen of a man in a woman's belly which makes her heavy, and her husband also, through contact with her.

The second medicine used at the puberty ritual is the *dipiki*,* 781
made from the bark of certain small-leafed forest trees. The same species is used by many Nyakyusa families, but the identity of the person who provides it is very important, for it is identified with the blood (*ilyopa*) of the family. In the puberty-marriage ritual the groom's mother provides the *dipiki* with which the bride washes at her husband's (if she is a senior wife), at the rite of 'putting her in' (*ukwingisya*), at the second washing with her husband, at the shaving, and at the washing before jumping over fire. The same medicine is used each time. It is also sprinkled on the bananas she eats at the *ukwingisya*. The bride's own mother, however, provides the *dipiki* which is added to her porridge and buried under the hearth the day she first menstruates, and that used for washing her father, or brother, and mother at the *ukwingisya*. Also, should it be known that the bride is not a virgin, the mother-in-law will refuse to bring her *dipiki* and it must be provided for each rite by her mother. The medicine is in itself poisonous ([illegible]). Kasitile's wife remarked one day that the bride sleeps with one of her maids in front of her, 'at her stomach', and one behind. We asked why. She replied: 'That *dipiki* medicine! It's poisonous. She 781
fears to be alone.' 'If someone has not given her the *dipiki* to drink 881
and heavy ones cook food and give it to her she goes bad, she has periods without cessation.' 'The mother gives porridge with *dipiki* to the girl and buries some under the hearth. That means may she be happy in her stomach, for if heavy ones warm themselves at the fire in the house, she is in danger of going bad, she will have a continuous issue of blood.' 'If the *dipiki* were not given, her period

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* *Umpiki*, a tree of any species. *Dipiki*, medicine made from the bark of certain species (one is a [illegible]) and used in the rituals of death, puberty, and birth. 126

787 841 would never dry up.' Kasitile said: 'The work of the *undumila* and *dipoli* are the same, they are together. The heavy ones will overstep the girl, they are going to injure her so that she is barren, constantly menstruating, with painful periods.' Lyandilikho, a woman doctor, and exceptionally intelligent, said: 'The bride uses the *dipoli* medicine because she is empty (*lunasi*). So she washes and eats bananas with *dipoli*. If she does not wash with it she will have diarrhoea.'

787 877 The *dipoli* is also said to make a bride 'patient and polite'. 'If the girl did not wash with the powdered medicine (*dipoli*) she might be rude and proud when she went to her husband's home and insult men there.' This was the statement of Mwakasolileja, an old commoner particularly well versed in matters of ritual, and it was apparently confirmed both by his wife and by Lyandilikho, the woman doctor, but not everyone knew the connection. Mwaihojo, the chief, who was present when Mwakasolileja gave his explanation, said: 'Really! I never knew that!' and his wives, when applied to, said: 'We don't know. The mothers know that' (this though some of them were past middle age).

613 787 841 Angombwike identified the *dipoli* medicine with the blood of a lineage and a bride's treatment with it with the union in marriage. He said:

> As soon as a girl grows up people begin to think about her bearing children. They say: 'The *unsitu* is discharged, the blood for bearing children has come.' When they grind and brew beer in her honour, they do it in honour of her 'seed' [i.e. ancestral blood]. They give her medicines for disciplining her in the lineage of her husband. When the mothers hear they say: 'Ours, ours, it has fruited! (*Jisee, jisee, jipuli*).' The girl is given a bundle of *dipoli* medicine, powdered, and is made to wear a belt of bark-cloth with the powder in it; the medicine is brought from the husband's home by his mother. The husband, as it were, says: 'That is my blood [or semen] which I have sent to her.' The little bundle is the symbol (*ikimanyilo*) of the child she will bear; the belt* with medicine on it means that the maiden's 'seed' belongs to the blood of the husband. The powdered medicine is brought by the husband's mother. A man's chief wife always has a bamboo flask or a pot full of medicine of their lineage (*ja lukolo lwake*), powdered ready for use. If she dies it goes to the second wife, if the husband dies to the first wife of the eldest son, and by her it is distributed as needed. The powdered medicine is the blood (*[illegible]* ja *dipoli*).

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* i.e. the powder made from the *dipoli*.

The bundle of medicines and the belt are burnt with the litter at the coming out. And whenever a child is born, every time, not only at the birth of the first or second, it is washed by the husband's mother with this same powdered medicine from the store in her pot. If this is not done they fear that perhaps the child will go mad or something dreadful will happen. They say of the powdered medicine: 'It is our kinship, it is our blood (*lo bukama bwitu, lo dago jitu*).' And if a girl runs off with a lover in the wild they mock her and say: 'Who has given you powdered medicine? You are no relative.' They say: 'She is not our relative, she has not got our blood. . . .' The medicine is to create relationship (*ubukamu*). Using it means that the bride is now of my lineage (*ikikolo*). You know that burial customs differ. When they have used the medicine they will bury my wives as they bury me, either sitting up or lying down, as the case may be. We Christians do not do this because we have another way. We take hands before the priest and say: 'This is my relative (*umkamu gwangu*).' 781 ● [596] 591 [602] [776]

Another informant (a pagan), questioned separately, gave a similar interpretation. He said: 'Washing with the medicine means, "my wife has come. She is now my relative (*umkamu gwangu*)."'

As already indicated, the act of washing with her husband proclaims the seniority of a wife. Washing with her own mother and her father or young brother, is to proclaim kinship. 'The girl washes with a brother to show that she has brothers and sisters. If she does not do so it shows that she is a poor person without relations.' 'She has washed at her husband's place, then she comes home and her father honours her by looking for a boy, not an old one but a young one, to wash with her. Then the girl thinks: "I have fathers, I am no bastard." But if she washed alone she would think: "Perhaps I am not their child, perhaps I have no relatives."' Kasitile said: 'If she washes with me, her father, it means: "She is my child, I begot her myself, she is my firstborn."' Mwakionde, after discussing the circumstances under which a father washes, said: 'To wash is to admit that I have lived and borne a child and grown up.' 'And if a brother does it?' we asked. 'It means: "You young man, you are her father." If they ever quarrel the brother says: "Why do you not respect me, your father? We washed together in water."' A young brother is chosen 'because the grown-up boys are going about. They want one who has not made love to girls.' 781 602

Standing in the doorway of her mother's hut (or of the woman acting in place of her mother if the latter is dead or divorced) is 602 585

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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881

between them. These two remain with the bride all through the period of seclusion, never leaving her, but the other maids may come and go if called away to perform other duties.

From the onset of menstruation until the ritual washing a girl may neither cross a stream nor wash; after it she crosses streams and washes her hands and feet, but does not yet bathe her whole body. She sleeps on the litter with her companions for about a month and 'by day and by night the young men sing songs with the girls. . . . The play in the puberty hut resembles adultery—we call it love-making ([illegible]).' 'The groom visits his bride on the litter.' 'Gifts of beer and firewood are brought by the bride's mothers ([illegible]) and, after her second period has passed, the rite of [illegible] (bringing out) is performed.'

The litter is swept out and burnt. Bride and groom are shaved and go separately to bathe. 'The women carry the girl and the man's fellows carry him.' The girl is examined to prove her virginity and the women return with her rejoicing, and make her and her husband run in and out of the doorway of a hut over which they pour water. Then follows the admonition.

At the [illegible] (bringing out) rite the officiants drink a special brewing of beer made in the following fashion: the chief officiant puts a little millet, mixed with powdered medicine, into a flat winnowing basket, makes the bride stand in it and, loosening her bark-cloth soiled by first menstruation, lets it fall into the millet.[1] Then she shreds and burns it, lest an enemy, wishing to prevent the bride conceiving, should get hold of it. The bride's fresh bark-cloth is sprinkled with medicines to make her 'heavy', the ashes of the old one are treated with medicines to ensure her fertility, and the millet is put to soak and brewed into beer in the hut in which she lies secluded on the litter. [illegible]

We saw the Kukwe [illegible] rite performed only once. The girl, a daughter of a chief, was not yet married or betrothed, so there was no groom to play his part, and the whole ritual was carried out in her father's homestead, her own mother going through it with her. She herself appeared most reluctant, and there were various modifications due to the pressure of new ideas. We quote the account to show the manner of washing, and of entering and leaving the hut—rites which were described in detail by a number of informants, and which are characteristic of the Kukwe ritual cycle.

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[1] It was not made clear by Kukwe informants exactly when this happened.

Record of M. W., 17 September 1936

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788 I arrived at nine o'clock in the morning to find Syungu, the elderly wife of the chief's senior brother, who acts as officiant in all the rituals for the chief's family, grinding and cooking *ipamba* together with a powdered medicine and red pepper, to make an ointment. I asked the purpose of the medicine. She replied: 'It's *ikipiki* that she may be heavy, that she may bear children and not be barren.'

273
788 Some of the chief's wives gave me beer—ordinary beer. They themselves were drinking from a pot which had stood in the inner part of the house ([illegible]) and to which medicine had been added. They explained that it might be drunk only by themselves, the chief's wives. A strange woman, a Penja, came along and, though warned that this pot was not for her, insisted on drinking some of it. She explained how Penja ritual differed from that of the Kukwe—they kill sheep for the puberty ritual. Usually this beer stands to brew in the seclusion hut 'on the litter'.

The women were preparing a dish of beans and bananas cooked together, and when it was ready a little was given to the officiant, some was put aside for the girl (*umwogi*),[1] and the remains were offered to the guests. One of the cooks threw away the central stem of the head of bananas used, but was told by the officiant to fetch it back, as all the rubbish must be cleared away together at the end of the rite.

After midday the officiant shaved some hair from the girl's temples and the back of her neck, and then she shaved the mother completely. I asked why the girl was not shaved completely and was told: 'Her fellows would laugh at her if she had no hair.' The officiant prepared four banana leaves, stripping each off on one side of the mid-rib and shredding the other half so as to make a rough fringe. Standing with her back to the girl, she touched herself over the genitals, breasts, and forehead, then handed the leaf back over her head, telling the girl to fasten it round her waist. She repeated the performance with the second leaf, telling the girl to fasten it round her neck. The girl complied with the first leaf but refused the second, saying: 'I have a cloth,' and she pulled her house cloth round her shoulders. The officiant followed the same procedure with the girl's mother, who fastened both leaves round herself. Then one of the chief's wives took the mother on her shoulders and carried her round the corner of the house. The bride followed on foot, and three other wives of the chief, singing:

Ejimale
Ejatile
Ejimalile
Ejatile

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[1] Usually we have translated *umwogi* by 'bride', but in this case the girl was unbetrothed. Cf. [illegible]

Traditionally

[illegible] no man entered the confinement hut in which a woman remained until the cord had dropped off the new-born child and she had purified herself, and she did not normally resume cooking for her husband for some weeks; but these taboos are less strictly observed than formerly, partly, our informants insisted, because the country has been pacified and men do not fear to die in battle if they neglect them.

The obvious interpretation here is that a man is felt to partake of the weakness of a menstruating or confined woman if he comes into association with her. 'His legs become swollen and painful and he is very tired'; 'strength leaves him'; 'he has no speed in running'; 'his belly aches and his body grows cold'. . . . The picture is surely one of a woman's physical weakness: a man is identified with his wife during pregnancy, observing the taboos she observes, and during menstruation and confinement he must isolate himself as far as possible from her lest he share her weakness; but none of our informants made a connection between the weakness of the woman and the weakness of the man—the interpretation is ours. The Nyakyusa were obsessed with the idea of 'filth' emanating from menstruation and childbirth; indeed, the feeling that women, by reason of their physiology and the taboo on washing during menstruation, are dirty, is cited by men as one of the reasons for not eating with them or sitting to chat with them. Only in this limited sense is the conception of ritual impurity linked with social [illegible] status. Here the contrast with a Hindu society, in which states of ritual impurity (basically very similar to those of the Nyakyusa) are linked with caste differences, is marked.[1]

[illegible] The second general conception underlying the taboos of procreation is that of [illegible], heaviness, a condition associated with sexual intercourse, pregnancy, the python of witchcraft, and medicines.[2] A 'heavy' ([illegible]) person is dangerous to an 'empty' ([illegible]) one, hence women sleeping with their husbands, and pregnant women avoid mothers with infants and brides in seclusion, who are 'empty'; and the 'empty' are treated to prevent diarrhoea and give them weight. Diarrhoea and 'emptiness' are closely associated.

[illegible] The great specific against 'emptiness' is [illegible] medicine, used in the puberty, birth, and death rituals, and even used to protect cattle against a menstruating woman. 'If a woman is the only wife her husband may give her *ikipiki* to rub on her hands and on a stick with which she touches each of the cattle. He gives them *ikipiki* that they may not be "empty". Then she can clean out the byre at any time.' 842 787

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[1] cf. M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (1952).

[2] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. [illegible].

A third idea that recurs, again and again, is that of *ukukilanya*, overstepping, which is used in both a literal and a metaphorical sense. It is taboo for a woman to step over her husband in any way, hence there are explicit rules (taught during initiation) on posture in intercourse. If she should step over him it is said that 'his legs will swell' and he has grounds for divorcing her. It is taboo for an adult to step over a child and for a woman who is having intercourse to step over one who is not, though a child may step over an adult and a virgin or youth who is not having intercourse may step over a married person of the same sex who is not. In a society in which everyone sits on the ground, often with legs outstretched, observance of the taboo necessitates care. 842 784 [516]

In its metaphorical sense *ukukilanya* is used for a 'heavy' person coming into close contact with an 'empty' one, as, for example, a woman who is sleeping with her husband entering the hut of a woman with a new-born child, or the mother of a bride resuming intercourse before her daughter has had intercourse, or a bride who has not yet brought the *ikikalipa*, the symbol of her union with her husband, to her parents, drinking from her mother's calabash, or entering the inner part of her hut; or a wife who has committed adultery cooking for her husband. It is used, too, of a woman who continues to bear children after the marriage of her son for, it is said, if she does so the son's wife will never conceive at all, or will be long in conceiving, or her child will not walk, on account of a curse. 845

MENOPAUSE: It is not customary for mother and son both to have babies. Women usually begin to stop intercourse when their sons marry. They say it is not good that both mother and son should have small children, because the mother of the young man now thinks of helping her daughter-in-law in nourishing her children. If mother and son both have babies, people are much astonished and say it is not a good custom; they create a curse (*ilyigune*) and the fertility of the son and his wife rots. 842 156 [781]

Mwakilopa's wife put it this way:

I leave off having children when my son is married for I should receive my grandchild in my arms, and care for my grandchildren, and be with them in the house.

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child, the beauty of the body, the blackness, has not yet come. It's 846
dirty ([illegible]); even after it's come out it's dirty.' 'The confinement [172]
is not now feared by men, they just go in, because European times have come. There is no war now, but long ago they feared to enter, they feared to see the hair and the navel cord. They said: "We will get weary in the legs."' 'When they went to war their legs became tied up.' During her seclusion the mother eats alone off leaves or out of special dishes, and even after she comes out of the hut she is careful not to eat with women who are 'heavy', or allow her dishes to be used by men. She has her own water-pot and calabash cup for several months.

To the Nyakyusa, the most dangerous point in the confinement is the loosening of the cord, and the baby is watched, day and night, to make sure that the cord does not fall between its mother's legs ([illegible]) for if that happens it is believed that the child will be sterile. As soon as the cord is safely off, mother and child are washed and shaved with *shipiki* medicine 'to get rid of the filth', and anointed with ointment. They are given a millet porridge mixed with *shipiki* which has been buried after dark at a cross- [789] ●
roads and left overnight. 'They say people will overstep the child. If they have not made porridge for him he will have diarrhoea.' The porridge is administered to the infant in the doorway of the hut. Then 'they throw out the rubbish ([illegible])', the litter is burnt, the hut smeared, and mother and child 'come out'. In some families the husband kills a bull, especially to make a carrying skin for the baby, but whether he kills specially or not the baby is slung in a skin which conceals it from men.

Angombwike made it perfectly clear that the use of *shipiki* in the 846
ritual of birth has a double significance: it is to 'close up' the 789
bowels of the child and the womb of the woman, and it is to acknowledge kinship between the mother and the new-born baby on the one hand, and the father's lineage on the other.

When a child is in the belly it is said that 'it's a person (*munndu*, i.e. a non-relative)'. When it is newly-born and has not yet eaten the *shipiki* it is called *[illegible]*, which means that it is not yet our relative, we do not know it. The child is called *[illegible]* until the umbilical cord falls off and it eats the *shipiki*, and comes out of the house. If an infant (*[illegible]*) dies in the house people do not mourn, they just say: 'The woman had a miscarriage.' They come to her and say: 'Have you recovered?' They do not say a child has died', and they don't say anything to relatives at a distance. As for the ritual, the mother undergoes a ritual alone, or with

846 her older child, only the two of them [i.e. the mother and the immediately preceding child]. Before a child has eaten the *ikipiki* they make it
789 of no account, calling it *kasesule*. . . .

When the child is born both mother and child are treated with *ikipiki*, and powdered *ikipiki* is sprinkled on the heap of leaves on which delivery took place. When it is a first child they wash the mother's breasts in the skin for carrying the baby, that is to put the child to the breast for the first time that they (the breasts) may participate in kinship (*gaje ga bukamu*). But for a second child they only wash off the dirt, they do not wash the breasts in the carrying skin, they say: 'We did it for the first child.'

Then they bring mother and child into the house (*bilindingeye*). To a visitor they say: 'Friend, you are a month pregnant, do not come in. You are heavy.' And if a woman is eight months pregnant she also does not come in, she is heavy. If a heavy one comes and wishes to enter, the mother of the newly-born child refuses at the doorway; the heavy one takes earth from her footprint and rubs it on the child on the litter. She receives him on her lap and the others say: 'Thank you, you have met with him.' Then the pregnant one can speak to or about the child without fear, she has met it.

When the cord has fallen off they bury *ikipiki* on the road; it remains overnight, and in the morning they dig it up and bring it and make millet porridge for the mother, not for the child. How can a tiny child eat? To the child they give powdered *ikipiki* in a little water. The woman and child eat together—it is as we, in our ritual, eat together the blood of Jesus, the *ikipiki* of the pagans is their blood. And when a child has eaten the *ikipiki* they say it is their relative now, 'it has entered into our *ikipiki* (*ingile nkipiki kyitu*)'. The mother when she eats the millet porridge closes herself up because much water and blood comes out of the womb. It is said heavy ones must not overstep her.

Then they shave the hair of the child. They anoint its head with *ikipiki* and shave it—not the mother. If she chooses she also shaves, it is customary, but they don't anoint her with medicine. If she does not choose she does not shave. They sprinkle fine ash from the fire on the child's head.

789 The *ikipiki* at puberty is one and the same, and at death, it is one and the same. If a woman had reached puberty and washed with a man, and then leaves him and comes to me, we do not give her *ikipiki*, we say: 'Let her eat the *ikipiki* of kinship in the birth ritual, when she has borne a child.'

Kasitile made the same points about the function of *ikipiki*:

789 Yes, the *ikipiki* of the birth, puberty, and death rituals is one; that of
846 the twin ritual is different. When a child is born they spread a litter for

him. They fear that if heavy men come and speak, those who are pregnant, the child will suffer, it will become weak and exhausted on the lines, and will have constant diarrhoea. So they go to the cross-roads and mix millet flour and powdered *dipiki* with the feather of a chicken, they give the child some in his mouth to make the motions firm, and clean the bowels. They do this[1] at the cross-roads that those who pass may step over it and take the disease away. That medicine cleans the bowel, it saves the stomach and bowel when heavy men come, those who are pregnant. If we do not treat it the child becomes exhausted with diarrhoea, though the mother is all right. 757 846

It is taboo to give birth in the house, a woman bears a child outside on a pile of leaves; when she has borne the child they sprinkle powdered *dipiki* on those leaves, but if I, the father, am angry about the child I refuse the *dipiki*, saying: 'It's not my child, it's a bastard.' That is of old though. Now, in European times, they treat all children. Yes, now all are my children; formerly there were bastards. The *dipiki* is our blood, it is kept in the senior wife's house. 844 [777]

There was some disagreement on this point. Nsyani, an elderly man who was already married before Europeans came to the country, when asked: 'Do you perform rituals for bastards?' replied: 'Yes, they are born with[2] my cattle (*Bapapigwe mumanda gwangu*).' Four other men who discussed the matter together, agreed that— 848

> When a woman has borne an illegitimate child we know that the child is the child of her husband because it was born with his cattle (*mumanda gwake*). Whether the child is a boy or a girl, whether the genitor is known or unknown, and whether he has paid damages or not, the children belong to the woman's lord (*[illegible]*). When an illegitimate child is born to an unmarried girl her fathers perform the ritual, for that 'man of the long grass' is like a bull. For an illegitimate child born to a married woman the rituals are performed by the husband, for the 'man of the long grass' is like a bull or a cock. Who is going to give a calf to a man alone, the bull who begot it?

But Lyandileko who, as a doctor and a grandmother, was intimately concerned in such matters, insisted:

> If a woman has committed adultery and we do not know the man, we give her earth; it's just rubbish. If I give her medicine she and the child will die. If she has borne the child in the long grass and her father refuses to let her enter the house, non-relatives give it to her. If I, the mother, am there I give her this earth [touching the ground].

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[1] The baby is not taken to the crossroads, only the dipiki and millet flour.

[2] Literally within.

byre or strike a beast with a stick 'until the twins had grown up' (an elastic phrase), 'but if he has no sons to milk a doctor comes and gives him a medicine to drink in the house, then he can milk the cows outside. To enter the byre is altogether taboo.' He and his attendant during his seclusion drink the milk of one cow only, which has been specially treated. All his wives avoid milk until the end of the ritual and the mother of twins herself 'can only begin to clean the byre after she has borne at least one other child'—some say two or three other children. If a cow is given her for milk (after the end of the ritual) it is taboo for others to share that milk. If these taboos are broken it is said that the cattle will purge and die, or their legs will swell. 845

It is also taboo for a parent of twins to pass behind people—he (or she) must always pass in front. 'They fear that if he passes behind, he (the parent) will always have twins.'

Twins, and their parents who have been through the full ritual, are thereafter immune from the danger of twin birth and may even go in to greet a mother of twins—Mwakalosile's sister, who herself had borne twins, entered his wife's seclusion hut. There are, however, two or three taboos which apply to twins in later life. It is taboo for one of a pair of twin girls to get married without the other. Angombwike explained: 584

> If a man comes wooing the first he must do it secretly, and when he speaks to her father he must do it secretly, he may bring cows but no one knows about it; if it becomes known they say the younger might curse herself (*akulisosa*) and die. Then when another has come wooing the other, secretly, the father tells them both to come wooing openly on *the same day*. They come with cows. Then the father summons all his children, and the twin girls, and tells them: 'These men have come to marry you, do you like them?' And he asks the elder (*ndosi*): 'Which do you like?' She chooses. Even if she chooses the man who came for her sister he must accept, and if he tries to protest people will hush him up at once, for it is the custom for the elder to get married first. Then the younger (*nsindikila*) says she likes the other one and their father takes the cattle. If either one is wooed secretly before the other she must stay quietly at home till a wooer comes for her sister. If she did not (whichever way it happened) the other might die. It is common knowledge in the boys' village here that of X's twin daughters a lover has only come for the younger, none for the elder. And so both are still unmarried. [76]

Twins and their parents, the fearful ones (*abipuyo*), and other people who have been treated with medicines, eat first-fruits of 264 789

[illegible] millet, beans and pumpkin with medicines. 'We fear lest the
787 medicines we have drunk will turn round in the belly';[4] and they must be buried in a hut. 'If they are buried outside there will be drought and famine.'

[illegible] *(v) The overt purpose and symbolism*
[illegible] The overt purpose of the twin ritual is plain to all Nyakyusa. Twin birth is thought to be contagious, causing other twin births, and also to make men and cattle ill. The ritual is to prevent this. Mwambulike, a middle-aged pagan, was explicit on the point:

> People are afraid to go to the house of a man with twins. They think that they will have twins themselves if they do, and we do not like twin births; they are taboo in the country. Or perhaps their legs will swell, or their bellies, or faces, if they go to his house. So we go to a doctor and he comes and sprinkles all the people in the village, even tiny children, and all the cattle. He takes a banana stalk to burn the twin birth (*pabulya ipasa*). He burns us because of the twin birth. The water is hot and medicated. He sprinkles us all with it and when we have all been treated we say we have been burnt because of the twin birth.

751 When a man has begotten twins we are in awe of this Kyala (*tukutila Kyala uyu*). . . . If people drink out of the same vessel as the parents of twins, or if the father of twins sleeps with his other wives, this makes the disease increase, the disease of swelling legs and stomach; men catch it, the wives catch it, the children and fathers of the wives catch it. There is also a twin ceremony for cattle; if a cow drops twin calves we fear the same things. You, your wife and children drink medicines, and the cows are all sprinkled with medicine—but not your other relatives, or neighbours.

Mwakilwele himself said:

> If I did not wash and went to eat with my relatives, my legs would swell, I should pant and gasp. Swelling of the legs is due to our shades (*amasyuka gitu*) or perhaps Kyala himself is angry (*Kyala yuyo akalalile*).

845 References to Kyala as the cause of twins are frequent:

> KASITILE: The shades are in twin birth, and Kyala is there—it is he who gives two children. We drive them away. Kyala and the shades are together. When we bury the *ikipingo* in the banana grove I say: 'Kyala, leave my bellows (which means my wife) for me, you shades leave it for me.' If the shades are angry perhaps my penis is broken in copulation.
>
> [illegible]: I have not heard people speak of the shades in twin

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[4] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 34.

2. Wilson M. (1934–1938) 1957 [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
Nyakyusa

783 KASITILE: The sons of Mwaihojo had a case against you . . . . you fought.
766 [illegible]: But that case concerned a woman.

A discussion of the case followed.

KASITILE: Friend, we pray here. Listen carefully.
[illegible]: I have spoken and not concealed anything.
KASITILE: That's what I say, let us pray well.
[illegible]: I performed the ritual for him. Let him die with his hate.
[illegible]: Let us confess [lit. vomit] we were angry.
[illegible]: Yes, it is so, we were angry. The sons made us angry.

783 Mwaisumo described a treatment with imbepo medicines which differed slightly from the one we saw and involved the slaughter of a sheep; according to his account the medicines are cooked in the pot like [illegible], and the participants are washed under a waterfall, though they are not made to vomit like the relatives of a murderer. Doubtless the details vary with the officiant, but the principle that medicines are used to cut the [illegible] remains constant.

766 *(c) Protection against sorcery or vengeance magic*

[illegible] 783 Sickness caused by sorcery or vengeance magic is believed to spread among kinsmen in much the same way as sickness due to the shedding of blood or bleeding with [illegible], and the ritual performed as a protection against it is very similar to the ritual for 'cutting the [illegible]' just described. We saw it performed after the death of E. who died on 23 March 1935. Her elder brother (heir to her father) and her husband, who were pagans, wished to perform an autopsy, but her younger brother, a Christian, prevented their doing so. Soon after her burial her mother and husband fell very ill and three weeks later (April 15) the five-year-old son of her elder brother M. died. An autopsy was performed on the child and the diagnosis was that his mother's father, after quarrelling with M., his son-in-law, had drunk medicines to bring death to M's children. M. explained: 'My wife has already buried two [76.5] children. This boy is the third. Previously we found evidence of ijaja* at the autopsy, and this time it is the same. The disease quot comes from my wife's father.' However, when M. went to question

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* *Ijaja* is a medicine alleged to be drunk by a senior relative, when he is angry, which, if his anger is justified, will cause his junior relative to suffer in his own person or that of his children.

isfortune and the rituals are distinct. In theory, when the shades 777
re angry the essential offering is that made in the sacred banana 775
rove or on the hearth; it is eaten by the grandsons of the most 763
ecently dead, and whether neighbours partake or not depends
pon the generosity of the officiant; whereas when neighbours are
ngry there is no offering in the grove or at the hearth, the neigh-
ours are feasted, admit anger and express forgiveness.

However, neighbours are slow to admit responsibility (for to 784
ccuse someone comes close to witchcraft) and in some cases there
s both a formal feast for the neighbours and a prayer to the shades,
and it is left uncertain where final responsibility rests. The follow-
ng texts illustrate this:

Mwaikambo: It is the custom among us Nyakyusa to marry many 565
ives, mature men and young men, so if a man has sons at his home it 837
ometimes happens that one of them makes love to one of his father's
ives. Perhaps they commit adultery in secret, perhaps he runs off with
er to a distant chiefdom. Then the father breaks off relations with him.

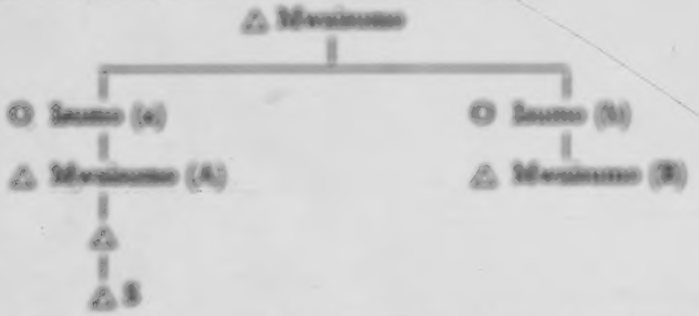
The son, wherever he is, learns that he has been cursed by his father 593
and his body becomes like green flesh. If the son is wise he gathers his 774
roperty and returns to his father. He takes a friend with him and goes 763
nto the house of one of his father's neighbours. His friend and his 621
ather's neighbour speak together. 'I have come to return unto my
ather because I have done wrong.' He tells the neighbour what they
ave brought to offer the father—usually a cow and a bull. Then that
eighbour seeks three comrades or perhaps four or five, and they go to
acify their irate fellow, saying: 'Our child has returned. He knows
hat he has done wrong towards you, but we have received him because
e has confessed humbly and begged forgiveness.' His father refuses furi-
usly and almost spears himself in his passion. His fellows pacify him
or the whole day, or perhaps two or three days, then at last he agrees.
Then the young man and his fellows bring the cow and the bull. The
ather also calls together many of his fellows and he seeks beer and 591
ooks food. They gather together at the father's homestead and the [illegible]
ather says: 'My son has come and admitted that he has done wrong, 789
sking that I forgive him and saying: 'I did not know what I was doing,
hese are the cattle which I have brought', and the others agree. Then
hey kill the bull./They roast some meat. The father catches one side of
t, the son the other and the village headman cuts it in the middle, and
he father and son each eat their piece. This is the blessing (*ukusaja*),
neaning that there is kinship between them now. They eat together.
Then all the people eat. Also with the beer it is like this. The village
headman picks a straw and puts it in the beer, hands it to the father
who drinks, and then to the son. Then other people drink, and they

2: Wilson E-3 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

sister immediately older than herself, the sister's daughters, and the 765
sister immediately younger than herself, took part. 602

At the ritual of spearing, the principals are the children and 783
grandchildren of the slayer and the slain, their brothers, their 602
mother's kin (abipwa) and their wives. We were not able to watch 602
any case of treatment against [illegible] and are not certain exactly
how far the infection is thought to spread. Our informants were
agreed that the number of kinsmen concerned is less than in a
twin ritual, but we traced one case in which a senior chief,
Mwaisumo (B), forbade the father of a man who had killed S.,
the great grandson of Mwaisumo's mother's sister, to enter his
country lest he spread disease among his relatives.

[40]



At a ritual to 'cut the rope' those concerned are the descendants 783
of the one who has been buried and their wives, siblings and sib- 602
lings' children. At the one ritual we saw there were present 27
members of the dead man's own lineage (3 sons, 1 younger half-
brother, 1 full sister, 4 half-sisters, 3 sons, 3 daughters, 2 grandsons,
7 granddaughters), one wife, the wives of 4 sons, one father's
sister's son, one son and 6 daughters of his sisters or half-sisters.

The ritual for protection against sorcery which we attended was 754
performed at the home of the senior brother (heir to his father) of 602
the dead woman. There were present her two brothers, their 754
wives and children; her father's brother's daughter; two wives and
one daughter of her sister's sons; her mother, two of her mother's
brothers with their wives and children; two of her mother's sisters
and the daughters of one of them. Her husband (who lived next
door) could not take the medicine at his in-law's house, but some
was sent for him to use at his home with his wives and kinsfolk.

In the simple ritual of prayer to the shades the senior kinsman 762
who offers the prayer and blows out water acts alone but, if there 602

585 between' accompanies 'the mothers-in-law' when they go to inspect or instruct the bride, and the wife of her father's 'go-between' is one of the group of mothers which takes the bride to her husband. The duties of a 'go-between' do not end at marriage: the [51] groom's 'go-between' is responsible for taking to the bride's people the hen to announce the birth of the first child, and, among the Lugulu, the 'go-between' of the father is master of ceremonies at the ritual of [illegible].

777 602 The ideas that emerge from this analysis are, that in the protective rituals—after death, twin birth, spearing, binding with ropes, and death from sorcery—the parents, children, grandchildren, and some siblings, and siblings' children of the person primarily affected undergo the ritual. Links through females as well as males are recognized—daughters' children as well as sons' children attend—but they are not traced so far, and a brother's or half-brother's children attend far more often than a sister's children. Moreover, children of an unrelated co-wife perform the death ritual for a woman rather than her sister's children.

593 Wives always attend rituals in which their husbands are concerned—indeed, they often come with their children when their husbands stay away—but when the wife is concerned as a sister or daughter, her husband never accompanies her.

593 602 The closest relatives, such as own children, children of the heir or of a related co-wife, and proximate full siblings, must *all* participate, but the more distant relatives select representatives.

602 The range of relatives concerned varies with the particular ritual—it is widest in the twin ritual and narrowest for an ordinary birth—and is also modified by proximity, for relatives who live near come when those in the same category living twenty miles away do not.

Affines (*abako*) never perform a ritual together even when they are next-door neighbours and close friends, but *abako* in one generation are *abipwa* (mother's kin) in the next, and a man and his *abipwa* can participate together, as in the protection against sorcery described. More often, however, the members of each lineage act separately.

602 621 613 Our Nyakyusa informants distinguished the officiants—*abanyago*—from those undergoing a ritual but they did not make distinctions of the sort attempted here between principals and kin who do not undergo the ritual. The distinctions they drew were between kinsmen and neighbours and between lineages. At a death

182

kyinja, ku [illegible], the sacred place of the fathers is the banana grove, there they pray.' 778

The virility of a lineage is symbolized by the *ikipiki* medicine, 776 interpreted as 'our blood' or 'semen'. With it mourners, menstruating girls, bride and groom, the new-born babies and their mothers are treated. To provide it or use it is to acknowledge agnatic kinship: husband and wife wash with it together in acknowledgement that the wife is now 'one blood' with her husband; the grandmother gives it to her son's child in acknowledgement of its legitimacy; in the death rituals the mourners eat food with it acknowledging their kinship with the shade. To belong to a lineage is to be protected practically and spiritually, and the *ikipiki* medicine is held to protect those who are 'empty' and weak—the 'hollow men'—from those who are 'heavy' with real semen or medicines. 841 776

The shade, *unsyuka*,[1] 'he who is risen from the dead', may be interpreted as the principle of life, but at the same time he is 'the one beneath', *ugwa pasi*, filthy, and fearful. What men worship is life; what they fear is death, corruption; and for the pagan Nyakyusa, as for the Christian,[2] the two are inseparably mingled. *Amanda* (sing. *ilinda*) means dirt, dust, rubbish, the litter of the seclusion hut, and also the shade. When '*amanda*' is cited as the cause of some disease it is the shades (as things rather than persons) which are meant: 'dust to dust' is an image of pagan as of Christian theology. We have spoken of the Nyakyusa disgust for filth (*ubunyali*), which is associated with a corpse, menstruation, childbirth, intercourse, faeces, and all these are identified in some fashion with the shade. Faeces 'go below to the land of the shades'. The hair of a corpse is the shade's, the hair of a girl at puberty is 'the filth of her menstrual blood'. In all the rituals the filth is buried, shaved off, burnt, washed away, and at the death ritual 'he who is risen' is brought 'to warm himself' at the family hearth, but yet he dwells in the earth and is 'dirty'. 776 778 [183]

The conception of impurity, uncleanness, associated with physiological functions of coition, excretion, menstruation, childbirth and death is, as we have already suggested, a very widespread one. 783

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[1] *Ukusyuka*: to rise from the dead. For the noun the personal class is most commonly used, but some of the old men always spoke of *ikisyuka* rather than *unsyuka*. A young man, commenting on this, explained: 'The shades are not people like us, but *amanda*', i.e. they are things—dust—not persons.

[2] 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.' John xii. 24.

764 and sniffed at the grave. When this son-in-law arrived, the chief women mourners got up from under the tree and went with him into the hut to wail. They came out all wailing. The women under the tree were wailing all the time with a leader standing up in the middle. But the wailing was drowned by the drums of which there were three sets.

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626
202 Three young men were got up with white clay spots and some had bells on their ankles and loincloths. They held spears, and danced and leapt wildly. 'What', I asked Kasitile, 'is the meaning of the white clay?'

KASITILE: It is war paint. During war we painted ourselves with white clay formerly. Then if I saw one with white clay I did not spear him. It was my comrade. But he whom I saw without it was an enemy and I speared him. It was the sign.

726 QUESTION: But did the other side not use it?

KASITILE: We took them by surprise.

MWAISUMO came to visit me in the evening.

764
771 QUESTION: And what steps are they taking about Kasanya's death from sorcery?

MWAISUMO: They sought the doctor, Mwangolombe, for the burial yesterday. He provided a medicine and burnt it on the grave. Then they buried the dead man and danced on the grave. That means they destroyed the sorcery. The dead man should take it away with him.

QUESTION: And has the doctor given them medicines to drink?

MWAISUMO: He has not yet done so. They will fetch him again to cook the medicine at the home.

QUESTION: What about the payment?

757 MWAISUMO: For yesterday they did not pay anything, now, but when they have fetched him to their home, then they will pay some shillings. But if many people have died, then they fetch a famous doctor such as Mwakikonde. Then he comes with all the protective medicines (*amapingo*) and tests them. Then such a doctor gets a cow. The famous doctors in this country are Mwakikonde and Kapugama and Mwakasungula.

787 QUESTION: Will they consult an oracle?

MWAISUMO: Why should they consult an oracle? They know what it is. It is the sorcery of their brothers!

759 QUESTION: But it might be the sorcery of another. Some say of Mwaihojo (the chief).

MWAISUMO: They are liars. See, Kasanya had just come from his brothers. He got the illness at their place. It is they. If it was from Mwaihojo and his people, they would have speared him by night. We would have found wounds and much blood, but we did not find them.

QUESTION: He came from his brothers?

MWAISUMO: Yes, there was a ritual because their father, Mwakilima, had died. Their senior brother inherited and he also died. Kasanya

third to cook food, and a final gift is required to make 584
her lie down on the mat along with her girl friend, 585
who stays with her for a few days. This ceremony of the gifts is never omitted in heathen marriages, and each successively binds the girl to her husband.

If the bride is a twin, the doctor must be present, to 787 ●
sprinkle medicines over house and bedding, and to give the couple a decoction supposed to prevent the occurrence of twins in the new family.

Except the daughters of Christian parents, all 582
Konde girls are married before they arrive at puberty, 177
and what has been described above applies to child wives, who stay with their husbands for about a month, and then go home.

The child wife having grown to womanhood, how- 583
ever, further ceremonies have to be observed. The husband arrives at her father's house with an ox for the feast, and a mock struggle for possession of the bride takes place. The women of her family barricade themselves in the house, which is attacked by the women of the other family. Payment of a shilling opens the door, and the further struggle which takes place in the house is brought to an end by the formal presentation of the ox. The husband and his friends enter, and engage in a weird dance, a mere tramping of the floor in unison, with shouting and waving of spears, no doubt a survival of what was once marriage by capture.

The washing and shaving of the bride follows, and 585
her bark-cloth is burned, and a new one given her, and then comes the feast of beef and beer, the materials

697 The complaint is not seldom made that in this respect they were better off under the Germans, for the Germans had a vigorous way with rascals, while now criminals are cared for in comfortable prisons, while honest men suffer loss for which they get no compensation. Professional thieves openly jeer at the sentences imposed: good feeding, houses, fires, blankets, and back to your "work" in fatter and fitter condition than when you left it!

[787] So openly, so far as their own immediate neighbourhoods are concerned, are thieving operations carried on, that both the doctor and the diviner (the two offices are often combined in one person) are consulted; the former to find out whether the proposed plans will be successful, the latter to supply the necessary medicines. Watchers being stationed [514] to give the alarm, medicine is thrown on the roof of the house to be robbed, to make sure that the inmates shall sleep soundly; and on the door, to make it open of itself, as many seriously believe. On entering, the first man in begins by handing out all weapons, so rendering the owner defenceless should he awaken; then a brand from the fire, which is always burning in every house, is waved about to fill the place with smoke; and a third medicine is placed under the heads of the sleeping people of the house. If the thieves dig in, as they often do, the work is performed with remarkable silence. When the hole is big enough, a large banana leaf is thrust in and moved about, to test if the inmates are really sleeping. Then one man goes in feet first, for a spear-wound in the foot from a

watchful householder is less serious than the thrust through the chest which ended the life of an incautious soldier a year ago. 674

When everything has been handed out to confederates, the doors are opened, and the cattle taken out; for the latter sleep in the same house as their owners; a custom which is attributed to the conviction that in no other way is there any chance at all of defending their property. If the owner has been killed in the house, the cattle, I am assured, will refuse to move; but they will pass over the dead body if placed in the doorway, and give no further trouble. Murder is a not infrequent accompaniment of cattle stealing. A woman was killed with a blow of an axe, not five miles from my house, because she awoke and cried out when thieves were making off with their booty. There is a story, which has been only partially confirmed by the police, that in 1923 six persons were killed by the owners of cattle with which they were making off. The cattle lowed while being removed, the owners were roused, and overtook the thieves, who were killed in the fight which ensued.

Old stories say that thieves possess medicine which make it impossible for them to be recognized should the victim waken up while they are still in the house. 674 189 They ask him if he knows who they are; and as death may be the penalty of an affirmative answer, it is easy to believe that it is rarely given. So confident are the thieves of the power of the drug, that they sometimes coolly arouse their victims, and compel

679 them to cook for them. One brave man, thus occu-
789 pied, suddenly thrust a blazing brand into the face of one of his spoilers, whereupon he and his confederates bolted.

685 The native law of reprisal is the same as the old American law of horse stealing—death on the spot if caught. The chief did not interfere in such cases. On the contrary, he was indignant if criminals of this kind were brought to him. He refused to look at them, and reminded the captors that it was their duty to kill them where they were caught: let them be taken off and dealt with according to the law without further parley. Hanging on a tree was the commonest mode of disposing of captured thieves.

But the Konde loves his cattle, and not all the fear of the thieves and their medicines will hinder some individuals from doing all in their power to recover their property. An old man came some time ago to ask the loan of forty shillings. He explained that he had been robbed, and that his plan was to go through the country offering to buy a cow, in the hope that the thieves, not recognising him, would offer him his own animal. It is pleasing to relate that the old man's plan was completely successful. *Per contra*, thieves sometimes bring intelligence, of a kind, to bear upon their profession, and cases are known where they have actually charged the real owner with having stolen their cattle, and had them awarded to them.

674 In strong contrast to the Nyakyusa of the north, the people of Karonga, though they steal from each other, do not steal from Europeans. During five years

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Nyakyusa FN17

If a spirit is to be propitiated, beer is poured out and petition made as follows: 241 / 776

"Ye fathers, I am about to sow my seed. How can it grow if ye kill what I put into the ground? If ye are gracious to me, let me see the harvest."

Finishing his oblations with the usual squirting of water from the mouth, he next day sows his seed in confidence. If there are no obstacles from the spirits he does not pray. Why should he? There is nothing to pray about.

The ceremonies are practically the same all over the Konde country, but many chiefs have special practices of their own. A very picturesque ceremony is that of the chief Mwaisumo. When the early rains have fallen, and the ground has been hoed, chief and people go to the graves of the ancestral chiefs, carrying their shields of ox-hide. The chief and his headmen, standing in rows, raise their shields above their heads, and Mwaisumo, taking water into his mouth, squirts it upwards, and prays for a good harvest. Immediately all the people break out into rejoicing, dancing, shouting, blowing bamboo whistles, and drumming. The seed may now be sown. 241 / 776, 622

The first hoeing is akuukera, gathering the heaps of dry rubbish and burning them. But even this is not done without ceremony. Every man goes to the doctor to get medicine, which is put into the biggest heap in his garden; then, when the wife of the village headman has set fire to one of the heaps, which must not be one of those in her husband's garden, all the 241 / 789

241 789 other women take fire from the lighted heap, and kindle their own, first setting the torch to the large heap which contains the medicine, the virtue of which is carried to all the other heaps as they are set alight one by one.

There is a custom, now passing away, but still followed by a few, of throwing medicine into the ground as one hoes. Many use manure for fertilisation, but the medicines I am speaking of have no manure qualities. They are ambota, something possessing mysterious power, the virtues of which are known by experience, but are not open to rational explanation. One of the best-known medicines of this kind is elephant manure, dried and set on fire, and the smoke allowed to spread over the garden. Where this is used it insures a bumper crop.

Not even yet, however, is all ready, for the seed must be doctored before being sown. A medium-sized basket is taken, and plastered on the inside with the drug, which, of course, has been obtained from the local doctor, who at this season does a roaring trade. Into the basket the seed is put, mixed with more medicine, and then sown. The object in this case is not, however, to secure a good crop, but to prevent the yield being interfered with. If even a sorcerer steals from that garden, he will sicken, and probably die ; or a disease will eat up his lips, and he will stand revealed to all men for what he is, a garden thief, and, it may be, a sorcerer as well.

241 476 Working parties are often formed for the hoeing, the group spending one day in each garden, and being

Nothing was left to chance. The spirits having been placated, the natural skill of the hunters must be reinforced by medicines. Indeed it is not improbable that the native would say that the whole of his skill and success is due to medicines and ceremonies. The warrior goes out to battle armed and protected by prayers, drugs, and a good conscience; equally for the hunter good morals, good medicines, are as important as reliable weapons and a steady nerve. *Undoma ua nyaago*, to ensure a good spear-throw, or a straight aim with the ancient rifle which some hunters carried, was rubbed into flesh cuts in the hands; and *Isarenge*, to make sure that the animal died quickly and without a long chase, was incised into the arms; but more frequently, and more effectively for this purpose, *Isalwale* was attached to the spear. This latter is a deadly poison, happily, perhaps, known only to a very few, for a single scratch is said to be fatal. It is said that the Germans tried unsuccessfully to secure the secret of its manufacture. The poison is attached, in a leaf, to the blade of the spear, and the thrust into the flesh of the animal releases it, so that it enters the blood, and causes a speedy death. 224 7/9 [3-7f]

Women must not touch or go near hunting weapons, which are kept in the roof of the house. The spears must not be placed near the fire, lest the game, sniffing in the breeze the smell of smoke, deduce the presence of mankind, and make off. The hunters must eat only freshly cooked food, for cold food destroys, as it does also for chiefs, the virtue of their medicines. Fatal results are sure to follow contact 224 7/4

223 which the birds settle on the branches and are skilfully caught. The other method is to throw dust in the air, where birds are numerous, just after the young begin to leave the nests. The birds, "thinking it is rain," settle on the ground and are easily caught.

224 *Fishing.*—Fishing remains an important part of the year's work for those living near river or lake. For river fishing, huts are built in the vicinity of the place where the traps are to be set, for the fishers live there as long as the season lasts. Ceremonies similar to those observed before the hunters set out for the bush, must be performed. Sometime in May, when the river is in flood, the chief fisher of the Mbuke dreams of fish, a sign that the time has come to begin the year's work. [[illegible]] A great quantity of *ankonda*, fish poison, is prepared, each fisher, and there may be as many as fifty, preparing his own. When all are ready, led by the chief fisher, they go to the water, and trample the poison leaves into the bottom of the river. The poison sickens the fish, which are then easily caught in the traps which are set for them with the mouth opening upstream. [[illegible]] As soon as all the traps are set, the men lie down on their backs on the bank, and proceed to invoke the aid of sympathetic magic. They open and close their mouths, gasp, in imitation of dying fish. The probability of a good season is greatly enhanced by this process, which, though omitted now by many, is still widely followed.

The traps are laid in rows right across the river, and are in the form of immense baskets with gradually

including the individuals killed, was told to the chief. 721
If the dream was favourable, confirmation was sought. 787
The chief took his zebra tail of office, poured oil into it, and hung it up in the house of his chief wife. If during the night it exuded cattle dung and blood, the sign was good; if blood only, it was bad. Blood indicated the death of men, but that was of secondary importance if the dung was there which indicated spoil in cattle as the result of victory. Along with the tail was hung up the chief's spear, which now gleamed and glittered like fire in the night, while the tail moved about with a swishing sound, indicating that the spirits urged battle. All this took place in the presence of the chief and the principal medicine man only; and their report was published in the morning, when the blowing of a horn summoned all males to the meeting-place. "My children," says the chief, "we are hungry. Let us eat the cattle of so and so." But he gives the name, not of the real point of attack, but of some other chief living in another direction; for there was always the possibility of traitors in the community, who would carry warning to the enemy.

A wild scene of hurry followed. Spears were 726
collected and sharpened, defects attended to, new 789•
hafts attached. The shields were examined and strengthened if necessary. If there was a blacksmith in the village he was besieged by warriors whose weapons had become rusty or useless, all eager to equip themselves for the spoil. But man and weapon are alike useless until they have been given power and

726 789 protection by the medicine man; and the armed warriors, standing in rows or circles, were sprinkled with medicine from a huge pot, rendering them and their weapons irresistible. In the rising of 1906 in the Songea area, it is said that the fighting men were so confident of the power of the drugs that they rushed up to the mouths of the German guns, only to perish there by the bullets which they believed would be turned into water.

Besides the publicly administered medicine, a more powerful drug was to be had for a fee; and the chief himself was armed and protected at all points in this way. One medicine ensured that his spear would find the heart of an enemy; another that the enemy's spear would fall short; a third he chewed as the fight went on; and a few very great chiefs possess a medicine which enables them to remove a fatal wound to a non-fatal spot. Those who could obtain it attached another medicine to the spear handle, and some carried a charm on their shields.

726 714 Fighting men carried spears numbering from six up to twenty; and the greater the number the bolder the hero, for a large number of spears indicated a determination not to run until every weapon available had been thrown at the enemy, or otherwise [567] disposed of. Great heroes were followed by slaves who carried additional supplies of weapons. Some had wide shields of ox-hide, and others had narrow strips strengthened by slim bamboos. On their heads they wore the *ikipubili*, a plume of red and black feathers, the capture of which from an enemy was

roll of the Great War was a terrifying revelation of the 727
unyielding nature of the Europeans in a quarrel.

Individual chiefs had special methods of securing 726
victory. Mwamakula's wife, when her husband 789
marched out with his forces, sat on a live sheep as long as the fighting went on: so assuring good luck to her husband in taking cattle, and preventing them running away when taken. Another wife sat on a cooking pot, to keep the enemy in a state of security while the warriors were closing in on them. They would go about as usual, unaware of danger, cooking and eating, until the storm burst, and there was no hope of defence. His sister had a *lusero* similar to the one carried into battle; and one of his old men lay down on the path, each soldier stepping over him as he passed on. While the fight was being waged, this old man sat on his haunches and pulled himself forward in that position, the effect being to make the enemy run. The *lusero* was carried hereditarily by Mfwimi, and when he laid it down it moved forward of itself as the enemy retired.

In the north there was a great prophet, whose 726
presence in the battle always assured the victory to 792
his own side; but if he retired, even for a moment, the battle turned, and he was brought back, by force if necessary.

Two great wars still stand out in the minds of the 721
people: the victorious march of the Angoni, and the slaving invasion of the so-called Arabs. Both these enemies brought with them methods of fighting unknown to the Konde, who fled before the Angoni,

593 send the son into his father's house. He walks through the whole house
789 and the mothers acclaim him. This is the sign to show everybody that
783 he has entered his father's house. The women call the *akalulu*. They are rejoicing because he has entered.

There are, however, some who do not return to their fathers. They remain strangers [*abandu* as opposed to *abakamu*] until their death. There is a young man at my home who took his father's wife. Where he fled to no one knows because he is still in hiding. His father separated from him altogether.

A son must always bring something and the father must collect his friends. If they just agree with one another and people do not eat any-
[753] thing, then the son will not be settled in well. He will be ill. They say that the illness comes from the shades. If the father is angry he mutters (*ikwibunesya*) and they hear. At first the people are not angry, but later on, when they have heard from the father about the matter, they also are angry. It is as if they help the father to mutter. Their shades are not there, only those of the father's lineage, but his shades have regard to the people. If the people do not eat anything and are not present, they are not satisfied even though the father is satisfied. The father prays to his shades alone in the evening with water in his mouth, and they pour out beer on the hearth-bricks.

764 KASITILE: If a rich commoner has died and the heir buries him with
556 only one cow, the shades and people are angry with the heir, breath
783 falls on his body; perhaps he falls ill, or perhaps his child falls ill. But they do not meet; people, the witches, are angry and the shades are angry; the shades because they have buried him with only one cow, people because they have not eaten meat, but the shades and people are independent of each other. The oracle says: 'The shades are angry,' it does not speak of people. It knows that people also are angry, but it speaks only of the shades. And when he makes amends he prays in the evening; the next day he calls people and kills a cow and he throws the *ija mmapa* meat in the banana grove and says: 'Here it is, Father,' and people say: 'Indeed, he did wrong, his father was angry.' But they do not confess, saying: 'We were angry.' No, they say: 'The shades were angry.'

754 Another type of case is that in which 'the breath of men' is
783 believed to have fallen on an infant because of its mother's disrespectful behaviour towards her husband's parents or husband's father's sister. When a child is thin and ailing with *ingoto*, the cure is for the mother to confess to the doctor who comes to treat the child all the rude things she has said, and provide beer (exceptionally a bull) to offer to her injured parents-in-law. They drink the beer with their neighbours and wish her well. Ambilikile's wife

782 the other things presented. In many places a pot half filled with beer is left all night at the grave where the offerings are made, and if the beer is found in the morning to have risen to the top, and filled the pot, it is a sign that the spirits have agreed to go to God with the petition. If it has not risen there is something wrong, and the wrong must be made good. It sometimes happens that the animal sacrifice is not killed, but is kept by the guardian of the grave, and belongs thenceforth, with all its issue, to the spirits. It is used just like any other cow, but it must not be sold.

An old custom seldom now followed is the children's rain dance. Boys and girls, carrying ashes in pots in one hand, and a small branch in the other, go to the cross-roads, with a leader who carries a fowl. They move with a kind of hopping and leaping dance, and, arrived at the cross-roads, they gather around the leader, who sings :

> " Let all old things fly away ; we get new things from God. His house is great. He has room for everything."

Ashes and branches are now thrown in a heap, and the fowl left there, while the children return as they went, with song and dance.

782
•789 It is remarkable that while rain is often so difficult to bring on, it is in the power of anyone, who has just cause, to stop it. But just cause he must have, and he must secure the co-operation of the spirits. This being done by prayer, offered by the family

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

representative, or by the chief if he can be induced to do so, the person who wishes the rain to stop, ties a bunch of feathers to his spear, dips the feathers in red ochre, and sets the spear upright in his garden. Or if he wishes the prohibition to act over a wide area, the spear with the feathers is set up in some hidden place among the reeds on the lake shore. The rain will presently stop. One man well known to me, takes a small piece of polished blackthorn in his hand, and wherever he goes the rain stops. His own faith in his powers, and the faith of many others, is quite beyond dispute. There is an old man not far from me whose family has possessed for many generations the power of causing the wind to blow, or to cease blowing, at will. The old man I speak of is believed to have exercised his powers quite successfully in 1923. 782 789 ●

A very few Europeans are believed to possess power over the rain. In 1908 a house was being built at the Overtoun Institution, Livingstonia, the residence of the Scottish missionary, the Rev. Robert Laws, C.M.G. The house was still unfinished when the rains were due, and no rain fell. At last, some time in January, the roofing was finished, and next day rain fell in torrents. Dr. Laws had removed the embargo! Similar powers are ascribed to another well-known missionary, the Rev. Dr. Elmslie of Angoniland. And still, if the rain is too much or too little, the people say, "Ah! it is the Great One at Livingstonia. Why is he doing this?" 797

Prayer for rain is offered in one place or another 782

791 come, answered with an emphatic affirmative, and with an intonation which clearly meant, "Why should it be doubted?" The spirits form a link between men and God, and there is, in the native mind, no reason at all to doubt that God can make the future known to certain individuals when it is His will to do so. The darkness of mind, so often attributed to the heathen, is not absolute, and they themselves, while readily acknowledging the superiority of Christianity, do not admit that they were wholly without guidance in the past.

The second class of foretellers are the *abakomwa malago*, a phrase which may be roughly translated as spirit-possessed persons, trance-seers, inspired persons. They foretell the future by means of an indwelling spirit, but the occupation is always temporary. The possessed person runs about calling, "Listen, listen, listen." His friends seek to restore him by pouring water on his head, but if he resists they let him alone, believing that he has a message. He breaks away, followed by his friends, who carefully note all he says. One man known to me climbed, in that condition, a mountain of two thousand feet, and on recovering consciousness was in an exhausted condition, though he showed no signs of exhaustion while in the trance.

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●789 These seers, if we may use a short name for them, announce very much the same things as the prophets, but they seem to have made the forecasting of animal visitations their special province. In 1920 a woman called Nakanjere declared that a lion would come

and kill many people. The chief, Mwenemusuku, 791
protected his land in the manner described in the 789 ●
chapter on "The Powers of Evil," and none of his people were killed, though the total killed by a lion in that year in neighbouring districts was very large. A letter in my possession puts the number at forty, while others say fifty. Where the chief protected his land in the traditional way, the people were safe; where this was not done, the toll of human lives was great.

In 1922 the same woman predicted that, for the sins of the people, a spotted hyena would kill many. Again the chief protected his land, and again no one was killed; while in a neighbouring and unprotected land, the death-roll was considerable. In the same year leopards were predicted in the Nserya district. The chief was urged to sacrifice an ox, but refused. Six people were killed, and a number of mauled men and women were treated by Dr. Brown at the Mission at Itete.

To the Konde, as I have already said, there is no 787
difficulty in connecting prediction and fulfilment. 811
The inspiration of the foretellers is not doubted; the animals came as foretold; why should reasonable men refuse to acknowledge a relation between the two events? At any rate it may be presumed that the native will go on seeing a connection, while the white man will fall back upon the ever-ready doctrine of coincidence, and refuse upon any terms to acknowledge any other relation.

There is, however, spirit possession of another kind, 755 828

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
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CHAPTER XVIII

Divination & the Lot

THE fact of death is not regarded by the tribes of Central Africa as forming a barrier between the living and the dead. The two form one community, and the means of communication between them are naturally therefore well developed. Living and dead are mutually dependent, and a certain amount of goodwill must necessarily exist between them. What the dead cannot do for themselves, the living must do for them; and what the living must know, but do not, the dead can tell them if properly interrogated. It is upon this fact that divination depends, as do omens also to some extent. The use of charms and amulets, however, depends upon the other, and perhaps closely related fact, that Nature is not a fixed system of laws pursuing its way regardless of human needs, but is pliable, responsive, and will advise, protect, injure, according to the means used by those who possess the power. 775 787 [789]

The idea that the whole system of consultation of the spirits, of the interpretation of omens, and of the use of charms and amulets, is based upon conscious deception—a few clever men in each community 787 811

754 the footprints of the victim, and the banana or other leaf on which he sat, mixed with medicines of various kinds. The mixture is not administered to the victim. It is enough that it has been compounded.

One more method of operating will be sufficient, though there are many others. The witch or wizard, stark-naked, goes, at night, after all are in bed, to the house of the person he wishes to injure, and there dances the dance called *kuyinga*, and then goes silently away. In the morning a child becomes sick, and shortly dies. Or, if it is not desired to be so unforgiving, the harvest of the victim will be blighted. The wise householder, however, is not without defence. He secures himself and his family, and his gardens, from this kind of thing by placing medicine in the roof of his house, which roots to the spot the dancing wizard, who is found there in the morning, and dealt with.

754 789 There is a very complete system of protection, which has been developed during the ages, guarding the person and the community against all kinds of evil, forming, as one writer has remarked, an insurance against accidents and evil powers. The protection against witchcraft is especially complete.

First, there is the risk of discovery by revelation, as in the dreams already referred to; or by experiment, as when the doctors apply their tests. But although the dreamer sometimes makes his discovery before any evil has been done, he perhaps as frequently fails; and the doctor is never called in until the evil demands drastic treatment.

754 789 Therefore it must be anticipated by the use of powerful medicines, which would probably be called charms in Europe; but as the Konde call them medicines, I prefer to use that term. There is communal protection, and individual. For the former certain herbs are taken, burned into an ash, and mixed with oil. The mixture is put into two horns, one of which is placed in the rafters inside the chief's house, and the other under the eaves outside, and behind. No one may approach the chief's house from behind, for the medicines would destroy him. But, wheels within wheels, another drug is known which can destroy the efficacy of the drugs in the horn, and therefore anyone seen approaching the house from behind would be suspected of trying to nullify the measures taken to ensure public safety. To make this nullifying drug, the leaves of *malimbalimba* and *undurusya* are taken, and their extract added to what is in the horn, which thereupon loses its virtue, and the public are exposed to danger.

To protect individual houses, the leaves of certain trees are taken, and laid on the fire, so that the smoke, spreading through the house, may ensure the safety of the inmates. Then the same leaves, pounded and mixed with water, are sprinkled on the floor; and finally the root of another herb is buried under the doorstep, and will effectually prevent the entrance of witch or warlock. When a new house is being built, this same root is placed in various positions in the foundation, and the house is now protected from turret to foundation-stone, and the inmates dwell in

security. As already said, no heathen house is without 789 ●
this protection. Gardens and cattle kraals are pro- 754
tected in similar ways.

But witchcraft spreads its nets far and wide, and it is not enough to protect the house, for a man may be attacked outside. To meet this menace, other measures must be taken. Each person drinks a decoction, and swallows a tiny white stone, found only in the Malila district. The effect of this is to enable him to see in dreams any dangers which threaten him personally from witchcraft; and to make assurance doubly sure, some persons wear charms on neck or wrist or ankle.

No one knows when danger will come upon him. One who looks you steadily in the face is probably a wizard; why else should he look at you so? One who does not return your salutation, or returns it half-heartedly; one who denies the reality of witchcraft; one who is a notorious invader of the rights of husbands; all such men (or women) are to be avoided, for they are all probably dangerous.

And the reproach of witchcraft follows one after 754
death. If the *post mortem* shows marks on the internal 763
organs, the person has died of witchcraft; but if the bowels are swollen or blackened, either to the right or to the left, the dead man was beyond doubt himself a wizard; the swollen condition indicates clearly the presence of the two serpents which were the source of his secret powers. Any suspicion that was formerly entertained against him is now confirmed, and his heirs may find themselves involved in demands for reparation.

754 789 In 1922 a sorcerer got into the house of the chief Kaloso, near Mwaya. The medicine which is always there brought him to a halt, and when Kaloso rose in the morning, he found him there in the form of an owl! Kaloso is one of the most intelligent chiefs I know; but he sent out word, and his people came in great numbers to see with their own eyes the owl which was a sorcerer caught in the act. The owl was not killed, for who knew what evil might be brought on the district if that were done? I suggested that it was an ordinary owl, which somehow had got into the house the previous evening. But ordinary owls, I was told, do not go into houses, while every one knows that wizards can be changed into owls by the medicine in the chief's house.

754 Sorcerers have naturally means of self-defence not available for common men. One wounded in a fight licks the wound and recovers; or if the wound is inaccessible to his lips, he takes the blood with his hand and swallows it, with the same result. One who has fallen sick of smallpox licks the pustules and recovers.

having received the cattle, but admitted that he was 754
deceiving the people.

There is a medicine which protects those who have 754
it against these lions. Kabeta himself, on the occasion 789
referred to, gave medicine to the people of Chinunka, and to the son of Nyondo. To Mwakapalira of Chinunka he gave charms to put on his neck, and a rod to carry in his hand, with the assurance that these gave perfect protection to whoever carried them. One Sunday, Mwakapalira sent his two wives to the garden to get *malesi* to make beer ; on the way they met some Christians, who told them that it was Sunday, and they should not do such work ; but the women replied that God did not stop working on Sunday, and in any case they were adequately protected. One of the women was killed within an hour by a lion, and belief in Kabeta's charms against his own lions fell to zero.

Individual protection, however, is not enough, and when such visitations threaten, the chief usually takes measures for the public safety. The following is the method practised by the chief Mwenemusuku : his doctor takes the heart and claws of a lion, which he boils together with the flesh of the dread flying-serpent *inyifiwira ;* the chief eats the heart of the lion, and is assured by the doctor that he is now himself a lion. The rest of the medicine is powdered and sent to all the headmen. These send out men to " walk the marches," bearing some of the medicine, and praying as they go :

> "Ye spirits, be gracious to us. This evil that is coming upon us, we know not whence it is. If it

> 754 is the act of God, let it work, His house is great.
> 789 But if it is the act of men, let it go where the sin is.
> I and mine have done nothing amiss."

As they go, they chew, for their own protection, the leaves of a shrub called *munyekomaso*, putting the chewed leaves into a small sack at the side. The common people are warned to go in certain directions only for wood and water as long as the lion is known to be about. When it approaches a village, the local headman speaks:

> "You lion, if you have been sent out by men, follow where your prey leads you; if you are from God, His house is great, go where you will."

Just how much effect this has on the lion, need not, perhaps, be too closely investigated.

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There are numerous stories, which, if they do nothing else, illustrate the naïve faith of native Christians in the protecting care of God. A school inspector, going his rounds in 1920, when Kabeta's lion was about, was offered the use of the protecting drugs, but refused. "God Himself," he said, "is my protector." In 1913 an evangelist was followed for some distance by a lion, and at last turned on the brute:

> "You lion," he said, "you have no master. I have a Master, Jesus Christ. I do not fear you. Do not follow me; get off in another direction";

which the lion, after roaring angrily, did! In the same year a lion was moving about on the lake shore,

but the Christians, secure in their faith, refused to be 781
kept from their gardens. No one, so far as I heard, 797
either Christian or heathen, was killed at that time. A Christian man, walking alone through the bush, was chased by an elephant. "And God said, 'Look,' and I looked, and behold a pit; and I went down into it, and the elephant passed me by; and again God said 'Look,' and I looked, and behold in the pit a very evil snake." There the written report ends; but as I had myself seen this man holding "a very evil snake" alive in his hand, I have no reason to doubt that he acted with promptitude in the pit.

The *inguluka* is a whitish snake, about four feet 754
long, with a deadly bite. That it should exist at all 789
is bad enough; but there are sorcerers who create it for their own purposes. Mwankosore, who lives about two miles from me, is believed to possess this power. He takes the roots of the *pusi* tree, which he puts into a pot along with a powerful medicine, and in a little time a snake emerges. The secret of this medicine is known to a very few, and is guarded by word and by spell. The intending purchaser must face a guard of other snakes sent out to kill him by the makers of the drug; should he, however, kill the snakes, he is acknowledged to be a great doctor, and a supply of the medicine is given to him, for which he pays a cow.

When a sorcerer wishes to kill an enemy, he takes 754
in his hand the snake he has created, and drops it at the house of his intended victim. It immediately makes for the doomed man, strikes, and returns with

759 money was to be used for. It came out, however, that it was to pay a native doctor, to whom he was taking his wife for consultation! The native's fee was two shillings. The fee at the dispensary would not have been one-tenth of that sum, but the patient preferred the high fee and the unqualified adviser. Nor is this surprising, when it is remembered that so much of the troubles which afflict the native, are believed to be due to the interference of spirits, with which the European doctor will have nothing to do; while the Konde doctor will consult them as part at least, if not the whole, of his diagnosis. Hence the confidence in him. He is in touch with the sources of the trouble.

759 789 And this same conviction, that the native doctors are in touch with the sources of the trouble, leads to some of the most foolish beliefs of the common people, and of the most mischievous practices of the doctors. It is the source of the absurd confidence in the power of medicine to turn bullets into water, for example. In 1897 medicine was prepared which would cause the white man, in what was then the Neu Langenburg area, to disappear. It is believed by many natives with whom I have been in touch, that some doctors are seeking for a "formula" to-day, which will succeed where the previous one so obviously failed; suggestive of a state of mind similar perhaps to that of our own alchemists of centuries ago; but suggestive also of a desire, at least in some quarters, to see the last of the white man.

757 782 Both the gathering of herbs, and the administration

757 782 of the medicine, is a religious act. Mwenekasangamara, the doctor referred to in the previous chapter, used the following prayer, when gathering herbs; it was given to me by his son, who got it from his father. And Mwenekasangamara claimed that it had descended through many generations in his family.

> "Be merciful to me, thou Creator. The medicine which I am seeking is the same that my fathers sought, and it was Thou that didst open their eyes. Show me the roots, and I shall know them. But if my patient is not to recover, hide them from me, and I shall know that it is Thy will."

The following, used when medicine is being administered in a case of ulcer that has resisted treatment, is rather a statement than a prayer:

> "If this disease has come from God, medicine will heal it; for God, who made us, made also the trees, and gave us intelligence to know their properties. But if it has come from men, I cannot heal it."

The last sentence means that witchcraft or the anger of a spirit is at the root of the trouble, and steps must be taken to discover the facts. Then, but only then, the ulcer will yield to treatment.

789 But behind both the prayer and the medicine, or at any rate in addition to them, there is something else. There are certain medicines which are never administered to patients; their function is to give power to the doctor himself; administered to a

789 patient, they would almost certainly kill him, for it is very probable that a patient who believed that he had taken one of these by mistake or otherwise, would die of sheer fright.

825 278 The *inyifwira* is a fiery flying-serpent, which lives in pools, and turns the waters red; climbs trees, which thereupon break out into flame, but are not consumed; chases its prey for five miles, and lucky is he whose heels are light enough to escape; and finally, when dead, its body is made into the most powerful drug in the Konde Pharmacopœia. It gives authority to chiefs, and skill to doctors and diviners, and the common man who obtains possession of a tiny quantity is assured of success and riches. To tell the ordinary heathen Konde that all this is fable, is like telling very good and not necessarily unintelligent persons of a few generations ago, that there was no devil, with horns and hoofs and a tail!

Only the biggest doctors undertake to kill this monster when a fresh supply is called for. And even they, before beginning, protect themselves and their assistants with a great variety of other drugs, not so dangerous to obtain. The creature having been located in some pool or other, a small hut is built at a great distance, into which in the past a slave was put, to-day a sheep or a goat. The hut is now clayed over, and closed on all sides, the clay being thickly planted with sharp knives, and the whole sprinkled plentifully with a powdered food, of which the snake is very fond. All being ready, a swift runner is sent to the pool, a bell in his hand, the ringing of which attracts the

CHAPTER XXIII

Wonder Medicine

•789 NOT that the Konde wonders; he wonders at the achievements of the European; but his own far greater marvels do not rouse his curiosity. They are part of the order of Nature, and no more matter for surprise than the effects of medicine administered directly to a patient. Through long generations they have known men who had power to stop the rain, or to cause the wind to blow, or to do other things which common men cannot do. Where is the difficulty in believing these things? Is it true that the white man does not even believe what he sees taking place before his eyes? "*Imbulukutu yo syola*," the ear is a deceiver, indeed, but you must either believe what you see before you, or give up all pretence of sanity. Coincidence? It is just as easy to say God, and a great deal more sensible; for it is God who gives to each man his powers; to one, power to cause the wind to blow; to another, power to bring lions and leopards; to another, power of witchcraft, and so on. In every case medicine is used, but, to repeat what was said in the preceding chapter, "God, who made man, made also the trees, and gave us intelligence to know their properties."

One of my native friends, when on a journey, chews, as he goes, a certain root; and he fears no wild animal, for none will come near him. The secret has been in his father's family for generations, and not one of them was ever killed by a wild animal. Another incises powdered medicine into his wrists and ankles, and he is absolutely free from danger of snakes. Nor has it ever been heard of that a man wearing certain charms on his ankles while crossing a river, has been taken by a crocodile. Men have been taken by crocodiles from time to time, but they were either too poor to buy this charm, or too foolish to wear it. It is all law, though the Konde knows nothing about what we call law. Get the right medicine, and the desired result is sure: that is law. Perform the correct ceremonies, and what you ask for will come, as sure as water will come through an open pipe: that also is law. But it does not follow that the native will accept anything that is offered him as a charm. He must know who made it, where the maker got his knowledge, what is his ancestry. Any proof will not do. It must be proof that will satisfy the Konde; and that is by no means what would satisfy a white man. But the obstinacy with which the white man refuses to believe in things that to the African are so obvious as hardly to call for explanation, is part of the reason why still the latter has doubts as to the perfect sanity of the European. One who does not comprehend the obvious is mentally below par.

In preceding chapters native beliefs and practices in regard to various illnesses, agriculture, war, lions, hunting and fishing, have been indicated.

•789 One of the commonest charms is called *isigita*, and is worn on neck, wrist, or ankle, as a protection against snakes, crocodiles, lions, or leopards. It guards also against sore eyes, ulcers, evil spirits. This powerful charm, the description of which reads like a patent medicine advertisement, is made as follows: take dry *pupwe* or *mphiyi* roots, reduce to powder, add powdered head of *kitumbi* snake, and a piece of *mphiyi* root; set the whole to boil on the fire in a broken pot. Then cut the roots into four pieces, string them on cords, leave two such cords in the house, and carry another wherever you go. If bitten by a snake, chew quickly at the charm, and then bind it on the wound.

When crossing a river, this charm, strung as before, is tied to the legs, the four pieces in this case hanging at about three inches from each other. Numerous other charms are used for the same purpose, but the one I have described is the favourite.

[755] Children suffering from mumps take small bundles of firewood, and lay them at the cross-roads, where the first passer-by will pick up the disease, and the children will immediately recover.

A youth who finds himself unpopular with maidens, goes to the doctor, who incises a powder between the eyes in the forehead. His unpopularity will assuredly pass away, as will that of a girl similarly treated. An older man who is disliked or distrusted by his fellows, has a different medicine incised into the same place, and with equal success. But, more valuable still, a man who is involved in a lawsuit, before either the magistrate or the local chief, or who wishes to gain

●789 the favour of the white man for any reason, can be supplied with a charm which will secure the end he has in view. For a few moments after the interview begins, he chews at the charm, then removes it from his mouth, trusting for the rest to what has been incised in his forehead. A favourable result may be confidently expected.

789 674 Thieving charms are also in use, and men who operate under such protection are called *balebi*. A drug unknown to me is tied up in a leaf, and thrown on to the roof of the house to be robbed, and also at the door, to make the inmates sleep. The thieves enter, either by opening the now facile door, or by digging; and immediately place another drug under the heads of the sleeping owners of the house. "May they sleep heavily; may they dream dreams," is their incantation. Another medicine is worn on the wrists. So bold are the robbers thus protected that, when they have removed everything they wish, they awaken the sleepers, and demand food (which is given to them), without fear of being recognized; but it is not perhaps surprising, considering the fear in which these criminals are held, that the victims never admit that they recognize the thieves.

The house, however, may be protected. Powdered root of *ikitebo* is spread all over the house, and any thief who enters will have sores breaking out on his lips, a thing which happens only to thieves who have ignored this charm.

789 426 Kondeland should be a paradise for debtors, for the man who knows the ropes can arrange to put off pay-

● 789 426 ment so often that finally it is either not paid at all, or paid when it is quite convenient for the debtor to do so. To secure this desirable result the debtor, when he learns that his creditor is coming to demand payment, slips out into the bush, where he gets the roots of a plant called *butisi*, which he chews as the creditor approaches. A most amiable conversation ensues, at the end of which the creditor begs his friend on no account to disturb himself about the small matter that lies between them: any other time will do just as well, and he will be delighted to call again in a couple of months or so. The same end is attained by incising a powder into the forehead between the eyes.

789 224 763 Hunting medicines have already been referred to. One is incised along the bone from the thumb to the elbow; another is taken internally, but this latter is dangerous, because it leads to a lingering death. When death draws on, instead of dying as common men do, the whole body of the hunter who drinks this medicine becomes helpless; the heart keeps going, the lips move and talk; death does not come. Then his friends come and sing to him: "*Ndembo syaya mmiyombo*," the elephants are among the trees. The sick man, puffing out his cheeks, emits breath with a whirring sound, which is supposed to resemble a sound made by elephants, and presently he breathes his last.

755 But there are few ills, imaginary or otherwise, for which there are no cures, imaginary or otherwise: and the cautious hunter, finding old age creeping on him, and his hunting days becoming a thing of

memories and yarns, eats food made from the flour 755
of a pumpkin, which destroys the virtues of his hunting medicines, and at the same time takes away all probability of his death being the prolonged weariness it would otherwise be.

Fishing nets are drugged to ensure a good catch; 789 ●
but here again caution must be exercised, for a very 226
great catch is an omen of a very large family, which 787
is not always an ambition held by the K‿nde people.

The mother who has just given birth to a child 846
must not cook food, nor may she warm herself at the 789
common fire; a small fire is kindled for her at which she sits by herself; and when the child goes out of the house for the first time a medicine is put into its mouth to guard it against the ills of the world into which it has come.

Christians do none of these things; but Christians 789
are not as other people. They have passed away from 771
the fear of spirits and from the dread of a world in which anything may happen at any moment; and the fact that they escape the consequences of failure to follow custom is having its effect on the common people, many of whom are cautiously experimenting to see whether they too may live a freer and more unshadowed life; but the belief in the protective powers of such things as I have been describing dies hard.

incorporating the previous inhabitants. Now saturation point has been 631
reached; their chiefdoms cover nearly all the available land and include 622
in their membership all the indigenous people; and the custom of dividing chiefdoms into two is doomed. At the moment, however, it is still a vital part of their constitutional law. The division of a chiefdom is apparent from the moment that a ruling chief marries his two great wives, for he builds their houses separately, one in each "side" (*ulubafu*) of his chiefdom. The son of each great wife inherits that side of the chiefdom in which his mother's house is built.

When the ruling chief begins to get old the two heirs are ceremonially 622
"brought out" and recognized as chiefs, though they do not assume full 621
powers until their father's death. And their "coming out" is also the "coming out" of all the young men, of all the boys' villages which have been built by the sons of the old chief's men. At the "coming out" each such village is formally given land by the old chief and his great-commoners, often in a new place.

In every village there is a headman whose title, *ulifumu*, is simply a 621
specialized use of the general term for a member of an old family who is
not a chief. Every commoner is called an *ulifumu* in his home chiefdom.[1] 624
These two uses of the term I distinguish by calling the village headman a "great-commoner." Great-commoners, then, are selected for their wealth and ability by the older great-commoners of the chiefdom and hold office for life. In the boys' villages before the "coming out" they are chosen by the older great-commoners—those in charge of their fathers' villages—on that side of the chiefdom. If they prove satisfactory their appointments are confirmed by all the great-commoners of the old chiefdom at the "coming out," if not new ones are then selected.

At the "coming out" the young great-commoners are ritually [754]
treated with medicines to give them the power of witchcraft which they are expected to use in the interests of morality, while the young chiefs
are treated with medicines to make them fierce and impressive themselves [789] ●
and to ensure the fertility of their land and the prosperity of the people under them.

Traditionally the young chiefs assumed authority, each in the young 621
men's villages which composed his own new chiefdom, immediately after 622
the "coming out" and in the old villages in one side of his father's chiefdom when his father died. To-day the position differs for the Administration does not recognize the young chiefs at all until their father is dead.

The separation of chiefdoms established at the "coming out" is often modified subsequently. In the old days brother chiefs frequently

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[1] Vide infra p. 33.

Mwambelo, younger brother of Mwakasungula, succeeded and 173
abandoning the enclosure at Mbande, went to live by the lake shore.[1] And so yet another step was taken from the traditional religious seclusion. His successors returned to Mbande; but the custom of building an enclosure round the houses of the Kyungu was not resumed.

In his reign Mwafulilwa, chief of the next tribe to the south of Ngonde, sought aid against the Ngoni and the men of Ngonde responded and won a battle. But the Ngoni then replied with another night raid in which they found Mwambelo alone in his house and killed him and returned home. Another attack followed before a new Kyungu had been installed, but it was repulsed, "for this time they had come by day!"

"And then the nobles of Ngonde made Gwa Sapasi Kyungu; he was a son of Kalambo, a chief of Ngana; for they said that, as so many of the chiefs of Ngelenge had been killed by the Ngoni, they would now take one of their cousins again as the Kyungu." And now at last Ngonde submitted to the Ngoni. Gwa Sapasi, with the concurrence of all the chiefs and all the nobles save one[2] sent a tusk of ivory to the Ngoni chief Mtwalo. "And from that time forwards the Ngoni never fought with us again."

A few years later, in 1875, after Gwa Sapasi had died and been 175
succeeded by Mwafongo, the Europeans first visited Ngonde. Arab slaves traders established themselves there about the same time, and with the struggle between the two races for the possession of Ngonde the modern period begins.

3. *RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS (MIDDLE PERIOD).*

The traditional status of the Kyungus had in part a religious basis.[3] 643
The ruling Kyungu and the spirits of his dead predecessors were 769
believed to form one divine company, the anger of any one of whom had
terrible effects: while in his own flesh and in some of his possessions 789
magical power was believed to reside. But the Kyungu was not alone in his religious potency, he was but the greatest of many. The nobles of Ngonde and the territorial nobles, the chiefs both great and small, professional rainmakers and doctors, the great-commoners of the villages, heads of families and even ordinary men and women—all alike were believed to have some access to, some dealings with divine or

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[1] Three nobles of Ngonde, in recounting this story, maintained that Mwambelo was mad.

[2] He was Mwenisungo, whose story is omitted here for lack of space.

[3] As this paper is concerned only with political institutions no full analysis of the tribal religion of Ngonde is here attempted, only those aspects of it are dealt with which have political significance.

643 769 789 magical powers. And the faith alike in ancestors and in witchcraft gave to every group of subjects a religious hold over their rulers.

(a) *THE THEISTIC ELEMENT.*

643 764 778 Though the early Kyungus had lived on the stony top of Mbande none of them had been buried there, for "the ground was too hard to dig graves in." They and their successors were all buried in the valley, each in a different spot. Over their graves trees were planted and grew up to form a ring of sacred groves round Mbande. Each grove has a name and the Kyungu who is buried there is usually referred to, not by his own name, but by that of the grove where he lies. Thus Kyungu Mwangonde is referred to as "He of Bwiba," Kyungu Mwakasungula as "He of Ipota," and so on.

643 731 787 782 Now drought and widespread sickness were believed to be caused by the anger either of some dead Kyungu or of the living one. "In time of drought they (the nobles of Ngonde) would go to a diviner to enquire who it was who was angry; they would mention all the names of the sacred groves of the Kyungus in turn and he would tell them that it was so and so. So they would tell the (living) Kyungu. And he would give them either a bull or a sheep, together with some beer—they would take one of the pots of beer from his own house, one of the pots which were continually brought by his people as tribute.[1] And he would give them some flour and some cloths also. Then they would go with them into the grove. Now the diviner would have told them that he (the dead Kyungu) was angry because they had omitted (for so long) to build his house. So they would begin by building his house in the grove, they would build a miniature hut with rafters.[2] Next they would kill the beast and hang some of the meat up on a tree—the rest they would eat later outside the grove. Then they would tear up the cloths and fix some of the pieces to the house in the grove—an action which they would explain as 'giving him cloths'. And, finally, they would pour out (some of) the beer and the flour. Nearly always, in time of drought, they would thus build a house in the grove of the Kyungu whom the diviner had mentioned.

643 731 787 "But occasionally if one of the chiefs had recently insulted the Kyungu, they concluded that it was the living Kyungu himself who was angry. They would go to a diviner and mention all the names of the dead Kyungus, but he would refuse to accept any of them: 'No—no.'

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[1] *Vide infra* section 4.

[2] This is the custom traditional in the sacred groves of all important chiefs, both in Ngonde and among the Nyakyusa. We have seen it done among the Nyakyusa. The hut which we saw built was between two and three feet high.

were dealt with by the local rulers or by the family-heads, not by 771
the central authorities. It was only occasionally that general fears or 643
misfortunes turned all men's thoughts together to Mbande. 565

Now the great-commoners of every chief were believed to have
independent access to his ancestral spirits and this gave them a spiritual 622
hold over him. If they compared him too unfavourably with his predecessors then, it was believed, those predecessors might hear and afflict him in various ways. And so it was also with the nobles of Ngonde and the reigning Kyungu. But as this belief was intimately linked with the belief in witchcraft it will be more conveniently analysed in that context.[1]

(b) *THE MAGICAL ELEMENT.*

Magic (the belief that certain particular objects, events, words or 789
actions, involving particular people in particular situations, possessed
in themselves an extraordinary power) was an essential ingredient of 643
the old pagan religion of Ngonde. While the greatest magical object in the country was, traditionally, the body of the Kyungu. And the fact that the central political authority of Ngonde was so largely vested in the nobles of Ngonde was due above all to their responsibility for controlling this magical object in the public interest.

If the Kyungu cut himself, and more particularly if his blood fell 789
to the ground, then it was the duty of the nobles of Ngonde to kill
him, lest the whole land be afflicted with disease; and if he was ill 643
likewise. "They considered that if his blood fell to the ground that 784
was his life falling. And they likened him to a god, considering it 753
taboo for a god to be wounded; they thought that if his blood fell to the ground it would turn into a sickness and all the people would die. And so, when the Kyungu was wounded, they thought it best to put him out of the way and start afresh with a new one. They thought it taboo for him to have even the tiniest wound on his body. And it was equally taboo for him to fall ill; everyone else, it was believed, would fall ill too; it was better to put him out of the way so that the people should keep well."

In consequence of this belief elaborate precautions were taken to 789
maintain the Kyungu's health. Sexual impurity was believed to be
magically dangerous to health in many ways and so the Kyungu, above 643
all men, must be guarded from it. It was not considered safe even 834
for his own wives to cook his food, lest one of them touch it during a menstrual period, and so young boys who had not yet reached puberty

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[1] *Vide infra* section 3 (e).

● 789 cooked it instead. One of the reasons for killing most of his sons, as we
643 have seen, was to lessen the danger of his wives committing adultery
834 with them, for adultery was a magical cause of sickness. His wives
themselves were jealously guarded.

643 Then again a Kyungu might not wade across the river lest the act
784 of doing so should magically bring a deluge of rain from heaven, he
821 had always to be carried.

And the breath and the growing parts of a Kyungu's body—his
789 hair and nails and the constantly replaced mucus of his nose—were
643 believed to be magically connected with the fertility of the Ngonde
764 plain. When he was killed his nostrils were stopped so that he was
826 buried "with breath in his body"; while portions of his hair and nails
and of his nasal mucus were taken from him beforehand and buried
later by the nobles of Ngonde in the black mud near the river. This
action was believed to "close up the land, to keep it rich and heavy and
fertile, as it was when he himself lived in it."

789 Now the Lwembe of Lubaga had equally magical flesh, but the
other chiefs of Ngonde and the Nyakyusa had not. They could wade
622 across rivers, fall ill and be wounded without endangering their sub-
826 jects. But of all alike the breath and the hair and nails had a magical
importance. Every ruling chief in both areas had his nostrils stopped
by his great-commoners when nearing death, while portions of his hair
and nails[1] were taken from him when living and buried after his death
in a special place. The hair and nails were held to be magically
connected through their growth with the growth of crops. "You see
these nails of yours," said the man who explained the symbolism to us,
"if you cut them do they not grow again?" (They do.) "And where
does their growth come from? Does it not come from within the body?"
(It does.) "Well then that is the reason, the great-commoners take
power of growth from the chief in the form of his nails and hair."

Besides his magical body the Kyungu had a host of magical
789 possessions. There was the iron stool *Kisumbi* on which he was set at
782 his accession; once he had sat upon it he could not flee the position or
he would die. There was the drum *Mwenekelwa* whose note was
believed to be heard by the most distant of the Kyungu's subjects.
When it was beaten "all the little nobles from afar off would hear and
obey the summons; they would all come together. Then we would tell
them that so and so had not brought any ivory for a long time! Then
they would come with tusks as tribute, to pay worship to the Kyungu."
But sometimes the drum would refuse to sound and they would kill a

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[1] We were only told about the nasal mucus in the case of the Kyungu.

sheep over it; if it still refused they would kill a cow; and if it still 789
refused then they would kill a human being, the child of a commoner. 782

Then there was ***Mulima***, a porous piece of iron "like a mouth organ," which the Kyungu used to make rain. 789 If he held it up out of doors with its holes clear, so that he could see right through them, then it would be fine, but if he stopped up the holes and then held it up out of doors the sky would at once become overcast and rain would fall. And there were his zebra tails set in horn handles, with medicine in the handles, which his people carried to war to give them victory; and his spear ***Kamisa***, and so on.

There is no sharp distinction in the pagan religion of Ngonde and 789
the Nyakyusa between its magical and its theistic elements. 771 Sometimes the magical, sometimes the theistic predominates, but often they are inextricably mixed. In the prayers and sacrifices to the ancestors magic enters at every turn: particular people, a particular place, particular materials and gestures, particular words are held to be essential to their success. Nor are the more permanent and obvious magical objects always free from divine associations. When we asked, for example, why the drum *Mwenekelwa* had needed occasional human sacrifices to make it work properly we got this answer: "It was because their god[1] had given this drum to the Kyungu saying: 'I alone am war, there is none other war save me.' It (the human sacrifice) was like a prayer. The refusal of *Mwenekelwa* to sound was like the prophetic fit that falls on people (from the spirits) commanding sacrifice (in the groves)." Or, again, it is clear from our evidence that the living Kyungu's power of causing a drought was believed to arise both from his relationship to the spirits and from his possession and use of ***Mulima*** together. His magical body and possessions, being inherited from his predecessors, were part of his relationship to them.

Now one of the material facts which had magical significance in 789
Ngonde was that of general social status. The magical powers of the 554
Kyungu not only contributed to the general political authority of
Mbande but were, in part, magically derived from it. 643 Only the greatest in the land could possess the greatest magic without endangering his life. There were, for example, a number of chiefs' medicines (*ifingila*), and if a chief used a medicine which was above his status then it was believed that, on meeting the Kyungu or some great chief, to whose

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[1] The phrase "their god" (*Kyala gwabo*) is normally used by pagans nowadays to mean the ancestral spirits, or some one among them. The term *Kyala*, which originally referred only to one of the most influential Nyakyusa spirits, has now been identified either with the Christian God or with divinity in general thoughout all this area.

789 554 status it rightly belonged, he would at once fall down dead. And many stories are still told of such happenings in the past.

643 And besides this there was the fact that the Kyungu, being the richest man in Ngonde and in the most intimate contact with the ivory traders, could secure medicines from a distance, which had a greater reputation than local ones.

789 771 554 But, as in the theistic aspect of the religion of Ngonde there was considerable local and family autonomy, so also was there in the magical aspect; and here there was individual autonomy also. Lesser rulers had lesser magic than Mbande, but still it was magic. Ordinary chiefs, for instance, had magically filled zebra tails which gave their people military success. And every individual could go to a doctor and exchange a little of his surplus food for magic. Success in love and hunting, in warfare and legal disputes, good crops and good health—all alike, it was believed, magic could give.

(c). *THE ELEMENT OF WITCHCRAFT*.

754 622 624 Both in Ngonde and among the Nyakyusa it was believed that certain commoners had snakes in their stomachs which gave them the power of witchcraft (*uvulosi* or *amanga*[1]) and among those who had this power were the great-commoners of every chiefdom. Normally a ruling chief was spiritually protected by his great-commoners from the malicious attacks of other witches, but, if he did wrong, then the great-commoners, so it was held, would cease to protect him and join in the attack.

Now in many circumstances the great-commoners' power of witchcraft and the power of the chief's dead predecessors were believed to act together. The anger of witches and that of the ancestors were sharply distinguished in theory, but in practice they often coincided. The great-commoners, for example, not only had the power of bewitching their chief but also of appealing to his predecessors to punish him for wrong-doing; and on particular occasions they were often believed to do both at once.[2] And the nobles of Ngonde had similar powers in relation to the Kyungu.[3]

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[1] *Uvulosi* is normally used when the act of witchcraft is disapproved of and *amanga* when it is approved of by the speaker.

[2] A point of considerable theoretical interest is raised by the repeated statements of our best informant on these matters that it was *because* they were witches that the great-commoners had this power of influencing the chief's ancestors, that they went to the chief's ancestors in their capacity of witches and in the manner of witchcraft (i.e. by means of the snakes in their stomachs). But our evidence on this point is not yet conclusive.

[3] So we were told when we put the question; but it was never volunteered. It was the hold which the nobles of Ngonde had over the Kyungu in consequence of his magical flesh which was the more emphasized.

even here it was rather position than area that was at stake : " We object 669 to their proximity, let them move further off," said the chiefs of Ngelenge.

Civil wars varied in size and importance from little local fights between neighbouring villages, fiefs or chiefdoms to more extensive fights between groups or even whole houses of chiefs. And in every case the political organization took on, for the time, a military character. Great-commoners led their villagers to war, chiefs their great-commoners ; the senior of a group of brother chiefs summoned his juniors to help him, while a great chief summoned all the local chiefs of his house. But only the Kyungu himself could summon the territorial nobles.

Now leadership in war is a factor of political authority ; the great chiefs, nobles, chiefs and great-commoners derived part of their status from their military functions. But, on the other hand, it is equally true to say that it was the other factors of their status which enabled them to exercise this military authority.

In every war, for instance, there were religious elements. Chiefs [789] had war medicines and prayed to their ancestors for success ; while the loyalty of the great-commoners and people to their chief had both a spiritual and an economic importance. Sometimes, in peace, the leading [787] commoners would dream of war and, if they dreamt of running away, then their chief would hastily kill meat for them. Such dreams were witchcraft and, unless promptly dealt with by a feast, were held to be a certain harbinger of future defeat.

" In civil warfare the Kyungu never took any part at all, he remained impartial at Mbande. His sons fought one another by themselves." (But what of the war, between Ngelenge and Ngana, did he not help his own sons in any way?) " No, he did not. For both ' the cousins ' and ' the sons ' alike were his children, he was the father of all."

(b) *TRIBAL WAR.*

The procedure of tribal warfare and that of the occasional punitive 721 expeditions against the Kyungu's subordinates was the same. Messages were sent by the *valukuta* to all chiefs and nobles of the plain to come to [202] Mbande. There the more important of them entered the Kyungu's house and were given their orders by him personally : " And then, when the Kyungu had told them whom to go and fight, he would finish up by saying ' That is all then, go away now and call down blessings on your arms.' So they would leave his house and gather all together, chiefs and their men, and pray."

The premier noble of Ngonde would begin, reciting all the names of 726 the sacred groves of the Kyungu and asking each one to bless [illegible] in their fight. Then after him each great chief in turn would pray [illegible]

When the eldest sons of his contemporaries reach the age of about 622
33-35 years the old chief is approached by his great commoners who say : 631
" The sons have grown up, let us make the 'Coming Out' for them." After a period of delay, for he is unwilling to relinquish his own honour and power, the old chief agrees, and the "Coming Out" takes place. His two heirs, together with all the boys and young men, whether married or single, who are sons of the old chief's contemporaries, are summoned to attend, according to their age-villages, at the old chief's principal house. When they arrive they wait there for two days, while the old great commoners discuss with their chief where to give the young men land, and whom they will select as great commoners of the young villages. We have already noted the principles which guide their choice of leaders. In many of the young village groups there are already leaders who have been previously appointed by the old great commoners, but these leaders are, I am told, only temporary, they are never reappointed at the "Coming Out ;" at the "Coming Out" "everything is made new," the boundaries of the young age-villages are redrawn, and new great commoners appointed in them ; only the groups of young men themselves remain unchanged.

The legal action which now takes place comprizes three events : firstly the public selection of new great commoners, secondly the public appearance and the public recognition of the two young chiefs, and thirdly the giving of land to the young age villages.

When the old men have made up their minds, one of them goes 624
among the crowd of young men and catches hold of those they have chosen in order of their seniority : First the one who is to be leader of the senior village of the first son of the old chief, then the leader of the senior village of his second son, then the leader of the next senior village of the first son, and so on. There are usually eight age-villages of young men, of these four will belong to the chiefdom of the first son, four to that of the second. The eight new great commoners are now publicly known, four in each new chiefdom.

The next stage of the action is the one from which the whole institu- 622
tion takes its name ; the "Coming Out." The two young chiefs are secluded for a few hours in the hut of the old chief's first wife, there they receive various forms of magical treatment and when it is finished, "then,"
to quote the words of a great commoner who told me about his own [789]
coming out, "the director of ceremonies said : 'Get up !' the chiefs got up, and came out of the house to us, and we, the crowd of young men, said : 'Come on !' and welcomed them. Then we all ran shouting and calling the war cry towards the next chiefdom. In the old days we would

> went from Mwemusi's country down the path by Mwakalukwa's to Mwakaleli. He lived a year at Lumbila and found it too cold, and thence he went to Masoko, and thence to Lubaga. All men feared him and his animals. 599

In another version Lwembe's survival is linked with the possession of *ifingila*, the medicine on which still, today, the authority of chiefs is thought largely to depend. [773] [173]

> Nkekete had much food and Mwemusi killed him because he had no *ifingila*. He killed him and he rose again. 'Why don't you die?' Mwemusi asked. Nkekete replied: 'I don't know, I have nothing, I am quite alone, I have no *ifingila*.' Mwemusi killed him again and he rose, many times. Then at last Nkekete said, 'I am tired.' And he showed Mwemusi and his men a razor (*ulwembe*) and said 'Kill me by cutting my throat with this', and they did and he stayed dead.
>
> Mwemusi feared to kill Lwembe because he was very 'heavy'. He had *ifingila*, and when they tried to kill him they found his house full of animals, lions and others. . . . Once he turned himself into a stone when they tried to capture him. So Mwemusi told him to go far off, and he went with his two wives and two men, Kissoule and Kimonile. He went off riding on a lion like a donkey, with a lion behind his wives, and men were astonished when they saw him.

It is perhaps significant that Lwembe who survived is 'The Razor', by which Nkekete was killed, and the python from which *ifingila* medicine is made must be killed with razors and in no other way (*vide infra*, p. 60). [789] [825] [278]

It is Lwembe's capacity to make things live and grow which is always emphasized: [773]

> Lwembe and another were given millet in their hands; Lwembe's sprouted, but not that of his fellow. He was told, 'You plant here and the other there.' The next day Lwembe's had sprouted, but not that of the other. He and his friend went to a hill in dry weather and wanted water. He just struck the earth and water came out. . . . He created leopards and kept them, and he moulded cattle of clay, he moulded them and they became cows, and his friends did the same and they remained clay.

When the heroes were driven out there was a fearful famine in BuKinga, for they had taken the fertility of the country with them, which is why, the priests say, sacrifices to them were begun by the Kinga. The priests of Lubaga were explicit on the point: [773] [173]

> Mbasi (Lwembe 15?) came from BuKinga, he took the road to

'Lwembe listens to him'. 'If Kinga messengers went [to Lubaga] 643
without going through Mwakalukwa's country there would be 793
much hunger. . . . Once Mwemusi and Kyelela [Kinga chiefs]
conspired together and sent off men with hoes to Lubaga, without 782
reference to Mwakalukwa. They carried ten hoes. But when they
got back disease killed many in the country, and they paid
Mwakalukwa and did not do it again.'

It is true that an independent Nyakyusa chief *can* send an offer-
ing to Lubaga on his own; it is received by the priests of Lubaga
and sacrificed in the grove, and such a sacrifice is held to be in
some measure efficient, but drought or sickness in the country as [753]
a whole is often attributed to one or other of the participating [731]
groups failing to play their part. Moreover, such a failure is
thought to be dangerous to the chief or priest who neglects his
duties, as we shall see in the case of Kasitile.

The priests of Lubaga ministered to the Lwembe but they had 643
also the right and duty of admonishing him if he did wrong, just [793]
as village headmen have the right and duty of admonishing their
chief. If the Lwembe broke a taboo 'then Kissoule and the other [784]
priests would be very angry and reproach him for bathing and
making hunger, and he would pay them a bull in recompense.'
Even the 'divine king' was subject to the rule of law. All through
the political organization and ritual patterns of the Nyakyusa [642]
there is this balance and reciprocity between chiefs and com-
moners and it is here that the Nyakyusa system differs radically
from that described by Professor Frankfort for ancient Egypt.[1]
The heroes had brought the gift of chieftainship to the Nyakyusa
but it had not ousted another, perhaps older, tradition of demo-
cratic leadership; instead, the two were welded in a partnership
which, to the Nyakyusa, is so much part of the necessary order of
the universe that they speak of commoner priests and headmen as
'wives' of the chiefs. The Kissoule in office is 'the wife' of the
Lwembe.

In the grove at Lubaga sacrifices of black cattle and sheep and 782
libations of millet beer were offered by the Nyakyusa, while the
Kinga brought hoes, bamboo beer, salt, the sacred drum *ngoma*, and 789
ifika, that is, marvels whose nature, Kasitile averred, he did not 751
know himself. The shrine of Lubaga, and the actors and actions
connected with it, are miraculous and terrible, terrible even to the
actors themselves who tremble when they enter the grove, and

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[1] H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (1948), pp. 51-6.

782 dare not greet their children on their return without the safeguard
789 of protective medicines. At a celebration the Kinga priests took
751 medicines, 'powdered medicine which comes from Mwemusi and Mwakalukwa [the Kinga chiefs]', and smeared it on Lwembe's forehead and shoulders 'because the grove is great. If you entered it without this medicine you died'; they gave the Lwembe the medicine 'so that Kyala (*vide* pp. 17-18) might not kill him, that he might show respect and escape'.

Another medicine, *imbinga*, which is red in colour, was brought
783 from BuKinga to smear on the foreheads of the children of the
789 Lwembe and Kissoule, the priest, when these two returned home after celebrating in the grove. Their senior wives 'would smear the *imbinga* on the children's foreheads, when they would turn round calling: "You hit us", and Mwakisisya (56) (the Lwembe) and Kissoule (the priest) would both reply: "No, I am innocent (*mwelu*)." The medicine was smeared on the children because Mwakisisya and his fellow thought: "How can we meet them, how can they look on our bodies, since we are taboo from the ritual." Yes, the words are the same as in the twin ritual, but the medicine is different.' During one of the rituals we attended, Mwakilima (111) begged the Kinga priests to bring him some of this medicine for the protection of his children.

The numinous quality of everything connected with Lubaga
778 can hardly be exaggerated; the Nyakyusa believe that it over-
769 comes even curious Europeans. The most sacred and terrible object of all was the drum which was polished with blood, the blood of children, who, in Nyakyusa thought, had died for the people, that the country might live and be fertile. 'Formerly,
[782] when the Kinga came with a drum, they said: "Catch the child of a commoner, fat and strong, hide him in the drum." In the old days when the Kinga came beating their drum, ping . . . ping . . . [single strokes with long intervals] we of the country used to run away and women would hide their children for fear lest they be snatched up and put in the drum."[1] The child was strangled

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[1] These statements were made by three different groups of informants independ-
[534] ently. All had special knowledge of these matters. The *ilikala*, the sacred drum of the Kinga, differs in shape from the Nyakyusa *indingala*. It is made of *ulaja* wood and ox-hide and is beaten when a ritual is celebrated and to summon men to war. The Kinga do not dance to drums and the Nyakyusa did not do so formerly either, but after the Europeans arrived Nyakyusa chiefs began to buy *indingala* from outside BuNyakyusa, paying a bull for a set—'a mother drum and her children'. Only quite recently have Nyakyusa craftsmen learnt from a Henga immigrant to make *indingala*.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959

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Nyakyusa

and its body taken to Lubaga and added to the 'medicine for 778
fertility' (*unkota gwa ifige*) which was sprinkled throughout the 789
country, starting at Lubaga, proceeding to the other sacred
groves, and then to the ordinary homesteads. Thus the terror of [782]
the grove had objective roots in the fact of human sacrifice, but it is rather a fear of the unknown and miraculous than of death itself; a fight involving casualties was not terrible in the same way as the grove and the throb of the sacred drum.

The Kinga priests travelled 'the road of Lwembe', down the 789
escarpment of the Livingstone mountains from Mwakalukwa's 793
country and across Selya, beating their drum. They stopped to 782
sleep at the home of Kasitile the priest, and poured a libation of beer at 'the places where Lwembe had rested': Isumba, a hill overlooking Kasitile's homestead, Kituli in Mwaipopo's country, and near the homestead of the priest Munyoso.[1] 'He [Lwembe] used to shout on Isumba, the little hill here, then no one would cut the trees on the hill,' said Kasitile. 'It was one of his resting places; he used to come here to tell my grandfather to go and get a cow for Lubaga, and later to tell my father to do so. . . .' The beer is poured at the base of an *alaja* tree (a variety of *ficus*) at Isumba, in the long grass in Kituli, and at the base of an *alaja* near Munyoso's homestead. 'They pour [it] out here by the *alaja*, they beat the drum to say: "We have come", then the people
of Munyoso hide their children—that's of old.' Besides the drum [778]
the Kinga travelled with a kudu horn[2] (blown in battle in [534]
BuKinga) and a sacred drum and horn were lodged in the hut of the Lwembe's chief wife. Before they start the Kinga priests make an offering of millet flour and beer in one of their own groves,[3] and leave there overnight the beer and salt and hoes which they will take to the Lwembe, 'that the aba-Ngulube (9) may see them before they go to Lwembe'.

At Lubaga there were several places of prayer and offering: the 778
trees planted at the installation of the last living Lwembe (*vide infra* 782
pp. 54-5), the trees planted at the installation of a previous

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[1] Probably grandson of S_4 and representative of a junior lineage to which priestly functions had been delegated.

[2] *Ulubilibu* in Kinga, *ilupenga lude* in Nyakyusa. cf. plate 3b.

[3] Nyamlala, a Kinga chief, and two priests took Godfrey Wilson to a sacrifice in one of their groves. The form of sacrifice is very similar to that among the Nyakyusa save that the meat-offering is placed in the fork of a tree. The priests had gone very early in the morning 'to tell Bulalilo (the dead chief) "Do not be angry, a European comes to greet you".'

looking for me", and so if there was much heat he would send 177 rain.' But this no longer happens. 788

At the same time both pagans and Christians tell a myth of how a European missionary, Rev. — Jauer (Mwaisumo), who [773] visited the grove of Lubaga intending to remove the hoes in the grove to demonstrate the falsehood of the ritual, was confounded [789] by a miracle (*ifika*).

> Once the missionary Mwaisumo wished to go and see the grove of 539 Lubaga. He was warned that if he entered he would flee because there were many marvels there, and the rain would catch him. He said: 'Oh, I shall go, nothing will happen.' So he went and entered the grove, and he found many hoes, some standing up, some lying down, and some of them had 'eyes'. He seized one to take it away, then there was a crash of thunder, and he was afraid and fled. When he ran out of the grove the rain fell in torrents. It is said that he was so frightened he left his jacket behind. From that time people said that indeed there are miracles at Lubaga.

'European times' is given as the reason for sacrifices being less 782 frequent and regular than formerly. The occasions were, and still [177] are: any period of hunger or scarcity, such as the Kinga regularly experience during the dry season, and the Nyakyusa also complain of at that time; any irregular misfortune such as a failure of the rains, a plague of locusts or an epidemic; and any prediction of hunger or disease by a prophet (*unsololi* or *unlungulula*). But the chiefs are said to be more reluctant to provide the cattle for sacrifice than formerly, and less quickly influenced by the actual occurrence of hunger or by prophecy that famine is imminent. Nevertheless they still 'treat the earth' (*akutendekegya umfu*) by sending a black cow to Lubaga when hunger presses.

According to Kasitile (86) and Mwamakunda (his fellow 643 priest) no ritual could be performed in the grove of the first 793 Lwembe when he had no living representative. Formerly, the 782 Kissoule in office and another priest penetrated alone, and there bound a live sheep and left it to bleat until a python took it. 'It is Kyala, he turns himself into a python' (*Jo kyala: ipela sota*). Here Kasitile used *kyala* in the sense of 'the lord' and he was referring to Lwembe. According to another informant, when the heir to any priesthood connected with Lubaga is installed he should sleep in the grove enclosed in a stout wicker hut, and remain there until the python of the grove comes and *licks* him. The case was cited of a priest who had lain captive for two weeks

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indicated (*vide supra*, p. 35). And, as we shall see later, he also 771
suspected that his quarrels with the Kinga priests and with the [753]
commoner priests of Mwaipopo's chiefdom made him ill. [578]

Chiefs, and even the 'divine king' himself, lived in fear of the
legitimate anger of their people, more particularly of their village 643
headmen and priests, believing that such anger would bring them 753
sickness, and this belief gave headmen and priests a very strong [622]
hold over their lord. How it worked was illustrated by an incident
at Lubaga.

Mwanjala II (78) remarked to Mwakilima (111): 'I sent to summon [776]
Mwaseni (a commoner priest) for the ritual tomorrow but he refused
saying: "I shall not come." He is angry because he was not called to
the ritual at your home, nor was he told formally when the Kinga
came, or when Mwaipoja [G.W.] came.' Mwakilima (111) asked:
'Will you pay him?' [i.e. admit your mistake and offer him compensation].
Mwanjala replied that he would, and Mwakilima expressed
disgust. One of the Kinga priests who was listening broke
into the conversation: 'Ignore him if he refuses to come. If it were us (774)
we should leave him and celebrate without him, but you Nyakyusa
are all witches, and you fear to ignore a man who refuses to come to a
ritual saying that he will bewitch you. You are cowards, you are!'

At this Godfrey Wilson asked if there were no witchcraft in BuKinga. The Kinga priest replied: 'There is some, but if the chief gives orders to celebrate a ritual and someone refuses to come we ignore him, and celebrate without him. You Nyakyusa *pay* a man for doing wrong. A man refuses to come when he should and then you *pay* him! If you are afraid of witchcraft why not finish the ritual and send his portion of meat to him afterwards?'

Another priest objected: 'Then he would say it was too small a piece.'

The commoner priests then could control even the Lwembe (for Mwanjala II acted in the place of the Lwembe though he was not installed), but at the same time the mystical power of the Lwembe was feared both by ordinary chiefs and commoners. Mwaijonga (80), who ruled before the European occupation, insulted and fought Mwakisisya the Lwembe (56), and killed some of his men, because 'Lwembe had spoiled the year', but he sent back the cattle that were seized.

In the old days it did not matter killing the Lwembe's men (in war), but [727]
no one dared to take his cattle, they feared lest he would spoil the year
and send too much rain, and a plague of ulcers, and cause the cattle to [789]

643 753 die. . . . People feared very much because the Lwembe had medicines for smearing on his body, which could cause rain, sickness, food, ulcers, anything.

● (778) And they feared lest they might get ulcers if they killed one of Lwembe's men 'on the road'—i.e. a traveller. In short, Lwembe's mystical power afforded the first feeble beginnings of a 'king's peace' in a land of warring chiefdoms, where strangers were fair game.

(c) Mbande

778 Mbande is a hill on the plain of north Nyasaland with a commanding view of the surrounding country and well suited to defence. The west side is precipitous and below the scarp edge there used to be a marsh; to the north the hill is protected by a wide reach of the Lukulu river. It is a sacred place and for many 643 generations was the home of the 'divine king', the Kyungu. Like the Lwembe he was the living representative of a hero, and was selected by a group of hereditary nobles from one of two related lineages, the office alternating (if suitable candidates were available) between the two. They sought a big man,[1] one who had begotten children and whose sons were already married, not a young man for, the nobles said, 'young men always want war, and destroy the country'. He must be a man of wisdom (*gwa mahala*) and generous in feeding his people.

The Kyungu's life was governed by taboos even more rigorous than those surrounding the Lwembe. He must not fall ill, or [774] suffer a wound, or even scratch himself and bleed a little, for his [753] ill health, or his blood falling on the earth would bring sickness to the whole country. 'Men feared when Kyungu's blood fell on the ground, they said, "It is his life".' 'If he had a headache his wives (if they loved him) told him not to mention it, they hid his illness; but if the nobles entered and found him ill they dug the grave and put him in it, saying, "He is the ruler (*ntemi*), it's taboo for him to be ill". Then he thought: "Perhaps it is so" (with a gesture of resignation).'

Great precautions were taken to preserve his health. He lived 751 in a separate house with his powerful medicines. His food was 643 prepared by boys below the age of puberty lest a menstruating [911] woman, or a youth who had lain with a woman, should touch it [646] and so bring sickness upon him; and his numerous wi[illegible]
[753]

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[1] *[illegible]* [illegible]. It implies both big physically and important.

immured in the royal enclosure—a great stockade—and jealously 643
guarded, for any infidelity on their part was thought to make [644]
their husband ill, and with him the whole country. [753]

When the Kyungu did fall ill he was smothered by the nobles
who lived around him at Mbande, and buried in great secrecy, 643
with a score or more of living persons—slaves—in the grave 766
beneath him, and one or two wives and the sons of commoners
above. And in the midst of all this slaughter the nobles brought a
sheep to look into the grave that the dead Kyungu might be [825]
gentle (*mololo*) like the sheep!

The living Kyungu was thought to create food and rain, and his
breath and the growing parts of his body—his hair and nails and
the constantly replaced mucus of his nose—were believed to be [778]
magically connected with the fertility of the Ngonde plain. When
he was killed his nostrils were stopped so that he was buried 'with
the breath in his body'; while portions of his hair and nails and of
his nasal mucus were taken from him beforehand and buried by
the nobles of Ngonde in the black mud near the river. This was [789]
'to defend the country against hunger', 'to close up the land, to
keep it rich and heavy and fertile as it was when he himself lived
in it'.

His death was kept secret—a relatively easy matter since he 643
lived in seclusion—and one of the nobles (*Ngosi*) impersonated 768
him wearing his clothes. After a month or two when the nobles
had decided whom to choose as the new Kyungu, the luckless man
was summoned to Mbande: 'Your father calls you.' 'Then he
came with his companions and entered the house to make
obeisance; they seized him and put the sacred cloth on him and
set him on the stool "Kisumbi", saying, "Thou Kyungu, thou art
he", and he became the Kyungu. Then they struck the drum,
Mwenekelwa, and everyone knew that the Kyungu had died and
another had been installed.' Men feared greatly to be seized as
the Kyungu, just as they feared to be seized as the Lwembe,
because the life of a divine king was short. Ngonde historians
quote a number of cases of sons of the Kyungu who fled to escape
being set on the stool; once they had sat on it they dared not flee
lest they die.

Though[1] the early Kyungus had lived on the stony top of 643
Mbande none of them had been buried there, for 'the ground was 778
766

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[1] The following section is quoted, with additions and amendments, from Godfrey Wilson, *The Constitution of Ngonde*, pp. 25 ff.

anger which brought the drought then it will rain (for I am no 643
longer angry). But if the rain does not come then it cannot have
been my anger, it must have been someone [of the dead Kyungus] [821]
whom you forgot to ask about.' 'And if, after that, the rain came
soon, then it was not likely that anyone would insult the Kyungu
again.' If, however, it did not rain, then the nobles of Ngonde
would approach the Kyungu once more and ask why it had not
rained. He would say that he did not know, that he himself was
certainly not angry, and they must have forgotten someone, they
had better go and divine again. And so they would, and then the [787]
diviner would tell them that it was so-and-so (one of the dead
Kyungus) and they would go and sacrifice in his grove.

Thus to insult Kyungu was not only treasonable, it was blasphemous, [687]
and the whole plain was believed to be cursed with
drought or disease in reply. An 'insult' might mean any neglect [688]
of the obligations of the chiefs and nobles and commoners of the
plain to their lord.

The people of Ngonde hoed large fields as tribute to the
Kyungu and if they failed to do so 'he grew angry and poured all [651]
the water out of the pot in which he kept his rain stones' (*vide* [789]
infra, p. 114) and 'the sky dried up'. Then the chiefs called their
men to hoe. . . . 'They hoed and hoed and hoed and their wives
planted, then the rain came in a torrent. . . . Kyungu created
much rain.'

Or if an elephant hunter neglected to send the Kyungu one of [651]
the tusks of any elephant he killed he would not kill another. 'The
country beneath was angry . . . the shades of the dead Kyungus [769]
. . . they were angry saying: "Why do you stint our child?" '

The rainfall in the Ngonde plain is less than half what it is in 643
the Nyakyusa valley and anxiety about rainfall was constantly 132
shown in the communal rituals; elephant hunting was also a
matter of concern in a way in which it was not among the Nya- 771
kyusa and this too is reflected in rituals; but there was also the 788
preoccupation with health and fertility, as in the prayers at
Lubaga. In the groves circling Mbande the nobles prayed: 'May
the sterile bear children, may the cattle and fowls increase, may [782]
the children sleep and not cry at night, may the witches not
injure anyone.' And as we shall see, it was health and fertility
that men had in mind when they cleared out the ashes each year
after the break of the rains. 769

Towards Christmas time, when the first maize and the first 796

769 pumpkin leaves were ready to eat, an elaborate first-fruit cere-
796 mony was formerly carried out. The new season's food was
offered first by the nobles of Ngonde in the grove of the previous
Kyungu, the one who had last died.

> [778] The great chiefs would do so next, each at his own sacred grove (the grave of his own predecessor in the title). And after them everyone, both chiefs and people, each at his father's grave. All offered first fruits to their own shades. And finally they would themselves eat, each with his chief wife. But they would not eat beforehand for fear of angering the shades.

643 In time of tribal war also the Kyungu and nobles of Ngonde
796 led the people in prayer. All chiefs and nobles were summoned
[721] from the plain and the great ones entered the Kyungu's house to
receive their instructions:

> [782] When he had finished speaking he would tell them to go and pray. So they would leave his house and gather all together, all the chiefs, and the other men, and pray. The premier noble of Ngonde would begin asking each of the sacred groves of the Kyungus in turn to bless them in the fight. And then the great chiefs would pray after him.

This organization of religious ritual in the Ngonde plain was both a factor of and itself determined by the general political structure. Many details of the secular power of Mbande and of the lesser authorities were dependent upon their religious functions, but the reverse is equally true. Among the Nyakyusa, where the hierarchy of chiefs had scarcely any secular significance,
[782] the organization of religious ritual was far less elaborate. Cattle were sent to Lubaga by the chiefs to be sacrificed for rain and health; but the 'clearing out of the ashes' was done by each chiefdom separately; there was no general first-fruits ritual at all; while, as war was never waged on a tribal basis, prayers and sacrifices for military success were always undertaken by each warring chiefdom alone.

643 The majesty (*ubusisya*) of the Kyungu was cultivated in a variety
789 of ways. He smeared himself with ointment made from lion fat,
and his bed was built up with elephant tusks and lion pelts. He
[352] was enthroned on the sacred iron stool called Kisumbi, he had a
[293] spear, Kamisa, and Mulima, a porous piece of iron 'like a mouth
organ' used to make rain, all handed down from the first Kyungu.
[778] His zebra tails, set with medicines in horn handles, were waved in

war and during prayer to the shades, and he also had the famous 643 789
drum on which the blood of a child was poured: [778]

The Kyungu had a drum, called Mwenekelwa, which sometimes refused to sound when struck, then they asked: 'What does it wish, friends?' and they killed a sheep and poured the blood over Mwenekelwa; if it refused to sound when they struck it again, they killed a cow and poured the blood over it and if it still refused to sound when they struck it again, they said: 'What does it want now? It wants a man.' And they took the child of a commoner and cut his throat and poured the blood over the drum and struck it and it sounded loudly. If the drum did not sound when struck it was as if it had boomed an order; its silence was like a prayer. The drum was to show the majesty (*ubusiya*) of the Kyungu, that all the little chiefs at a distance might say: 'Something is happening, let us hear what it is.' Then they all gathered and were told to bring ivory. . . . They needed the blood of a man because their Lord (*Kyala gwabo*, i.e. the Kyungu) had fastened up the drum saying 'I myself am war, there is no other war' . . . [782]

The corpses of those sacrificed to the drum, like those condemned to death, were thrown over the scarp edge of Mbande, to be sucked into the marsh beneath.

Towards the early Kyungus their subjects expressed the feelings 643
of worship and terror appropriate to an irascible divinity. 782

At Mbande the nobles of Ngonde would sit round praising the Kyungu —the drums went *kinde! kinde!* And they would praise him in antiphony: 'Oh, Kyungu! . . . Great Father! Great Father!—burier of men!—Great Father! Great Father!—Great Father!—O Mpeta![1]—Great Father! Great Father!—O Kiposa[1]—Great Father! Great Father!—O Kyabala![1]—Great Father! Great Father! O Striker and Stabber! Great Father! Great Father! O Mwenende! Great Father! Great Father! O Mpolombasambo! Great Father! Great Father! Dweller in the hot sun!—Great Father! Great Father!—O Fish-eater! O Banana-eater!—Great Father! Great Father!' [539]

The general form of this praise-song was identical with that of the prayers in the sacred groves and so it is literally true to say that the nobles of Ngonde worshipped the living Kyungus.

But the majority of their subjects only worshipped from afar in 643
fear and trembling. At Mbande no ordinary commoner was ever conducted into the sacred enclosure, but only the territorial nobles and the elder chiefs, and they only occasionally; while when the Kyungu travelled through his country all men save the

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[1] These names are obscure.

782 black and white) animals are killed, with the same symbolism as
793 in BuKinga.[1] 'We kill a white sheep in the dry season that the
[789] sun may shine—if we killed a black sheep in summer the wet season would last all the year.'

The Kinga pray for fertility of the fields, that illness may pass, that they 'may sleep at home'; the local people[2] for fertility of the fields and that the pots they make (and on the sale of which they largely depend) may not crack in the firing. The more distant chiefdoms of the Nyakyusa plain sacrifice only in drought or plague—the last sacrifice remembered was during a plague of locusts about 1915, but the Kinga chief Kyelela sent a cow in PaliKyala in July 1937.

Like the grove of Lubaga, Kyala's cave is fearful. There is a
778 story of two men who took a length of creeper from near it to tie
688 up their canoe, and when they got home both went mad. Godfrey Wilson's guide, a young Christian, refused to enter the cave on the grounds that his pagan half-brother had once entered and taken away a potsherd and 'when he got home he went mad'.

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[177] [1] Merensky appears to have been misinformed on this point, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-2.

[323] [2] The potters are primarily Kisi, but neighbouring Nyakyusa have taken to this lucrative trade.

643 often leaks out, but in theory the young men must not know, and
622 those seized always put up a show of resistance before being
796 bundled into the hut of the senior heir's mother. Once there, no
man dare flee lest, like a Lwembe fleeing from the stool, he should
[784] die. The two heirs are seized also and carried into the hut with
their headmen. A litter is spread for them, and they remain there
in complete seclusion, required to 'talk softly' and avoid quarrelling,
guarded by the 'doctor of the coming out' and forbidden to
wash except that each of the chiefs and his senior village headman
washes with medicines in the doorway of the hut. Each chief also
lies down with a commoner and is covered with a black cloth
● [789] which, according to Mwandisi (the old blind chief 107) is a
symbol of clouds and therefore of plenty. 'It means, may it be
heavy—cloudy—above, may food be plentiful; may both heirs
bring fruitfulness.' The commoner who lies with the chief is 'one
body with him', 'his wife', and continues through life to share
with him certain medicines. Some said that the senior village
headman performs this function for his chief: others that it is
another man altogether. The whole matter is very secret and our
information is limited. The period of seclusion varies. Mwanyilu
(177), who 'came out' in 1953, remained in the hut a month, and
he complained most bitterly of the inconvenience of not washing
for so long. During this time the young men are admonished by
[867] their fathers' senior village headmen, and told of their faults and
their future duties. According to Mwambuputa (Mwankuga's
[150] senior headman who was responsible for bringing out
Mwanyilu), he said: 'Listen to the people: they are the real chiefs!
Be hospitable! Greet people politely! Don't beat your men!'
And the other senior headman, Kakuju, said: 'Do not beat
your men, respect them! Feed your people on milk, meat,
chickens, beer! Fear your people!'

Then the great moment, from which the ritual takes its name,
arrives. Very early in the morning a crowd gathers and a junior
kinsman of the chief knocks on the door and shouts: 'Come out!
War has come!' Each heir, followed by his senior headman,
rushes out and grasps the 'spear of chieftainship' held ready at the
[778] doorway for him, while the headman grasps a medicated zebra
tail. The spear has a little horn of medicines bound to it 'to show
that the chief has come out', and brandishing it is 'comparable
to carrying the chief aloft. We show his greatness to the people
and acclaim him.' 'The spear of chieftainship is strength, man-

622 He, like many of his men, may have been married long before the
643 'coming out', but his ritual wedding to the mothers of his heirs
796 follows it, and from the time of his seclusion, until his marriage,
585 he, and all his men, should live as bachelors. The brides are
chosen by his village headmen and in theory they are carried off
by force, whether betrothed or not, but nowadays, since the
[177] Administration discountenances forced marriages, the headmen
arrange matters with the girls' families beforehand, very privately,
but still they come with a show of force to carry off the brides.
Girls are chosen who are approaching puberty and they are taken
to the house of a commoner contemporary of their future husband.
There they live until both have grown up and the puberty ritual
can be celebrated. It follows the usual course except that the
[584] neighbours of the man in whose house the brides are secluded
play the part of the girls' families, cooking for the groom's party
at the prescribed feasts. The chief washes with both girls, thereby
acknowledging them as his senior wives; the marriage bed is
prepared with medicines and there is great rejoicing. The following
morning someone knocks at the door of the nuptial chamber
crying: 'War has come', and the chief and his brides rush out to
the pasture land, just as the parents of twins do at the end of their
ritual.[1] Then[2] a long narrow stone (*ulufiga*) is set with medicines
[789] in the earth, beside the chief's trees as a symbol of his marriage
(*ikimanyilo kya bwegi*) to the mothers of his heirs. 'The stone *is* the
chief' (*ilifiga ili jo malafyale*). Hearth-bricks (*amafiga*) are then set
up for each bride with medicines buried beneath them, and they
are given fire from that ritually kindled by their husband and
his headman. Finally they are given medicines to drink in order
to develop in them 'the dignity of chief's wives' (*ubusisya bwa
bwehe*).

No marriage is complete, in Nyakyusa eyes, until cattle have
643 been handed over, and though the chief's brides have been carried
583 off by force, cattle—more than double the normal number—are
given to their fathers. The village headmen of the retiring generation
should provide these cattle and they or their heirs are recompensed
when the eldest daughters born of the two wives are

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 158, 169.

[2] Mwanyilu's marriage apparently preceded the planting of his trees and the phallic stone was erected at the same time as the trees were planted, but the marriages of the sons of Mwangoka *followed* the planting of their trees. The order of events seems to vary, and differences are explained as due to the order of the doctor in charge of the ritual. 'Different doctors have different customs.'

643 cattle and protecting one's own, and to attract men to the
778 country.

The two senior sons of a chief are given powdered *ikingila* to
789 drink from early childhood; at the 'coming out' they lie on it and
643 drink it again with their village headmen, some is buried beneath
778 their ritual trees, and the chief's homestead is treated with it
periodically. One form of *ikingila* is made of the heart of a lion and the heart of a leopard, together with the scrapings from a charred root, and one of its qualities is to create lions or leopards which guard the trees under which it is buried. 'They make anyone who has cut a branch of one of the trees for firewood tremble at night, he trembles and returns the wood; they do not kill, but they stay roaring there until he repents.' Now part of the dignity (*ubusisya*) of a chief is that lions and leopards attend him; they roam his
[776] country; they are his familiars (*imbege*). 'The sons of Lwembe'
lack the fearful power of their great ancestor who 'rode a lion like a donkey', but they are believed to command familiars which clear the country of the wild pig that destroy men's gardens, and protect the sacred groves by terrifying any sacrilegious person who dares chop wood where he should fear. But they do not kill men or cattle. That is what distinguishes them from 'God's lions which kill cattle even by day' and the man-eaters made by sorcerers to
[754] destroy those they hate. There is no hint of lycanthropy—our
informants denied emphatically that chiefs, dead or alive, turned into *imbege*, but they 'follow the chief' when he travels.

A second *ikingila*, sprinkled on the chief's mat when he is secluded, and drunk with his two senior village headmen, is made of red, black, and shining white or yellow pebbles, which are ground up and mixed with *imbinga*, a medicine brought by the Kinga, but the symbolism of these ingredients remains obscure.

The greatest of the *ifingila*, used only for the chief himself, is *inyifwila*, a terrible substance with power perilously like that of witchcraft. When either of the senior wives of a chief gives birth
[844] to a son a little is hidden in the litter on which she lies; it is put
into the litter on which the heirs lie at the 'coming out'; and into the sacred tails and trumpets which are carried into battle. Like other medicines of chieftainship, *inyifwila* is used to give the chief majesty (*ubusisya*), 'that people who meet him may fear him'; that he and his warriors may appear fierce; that they may be 'heavy and strong' in war; that when the trumpet is blown it

may 'make the enemy fearful and sue for peace'; and that even 643
men who have left his country may return to him. And it is so 778
powerful that the dose must be carefully adapted to the individual. 789
If a chief is already 'heavy' with an inherited python he is given the merest fragment, but a gentle fellow thought to be 'light', 'empty', is given more, that his words may carry weight. Too much will make a chief harsh (*nkali*)—'he will always be beating men'—and he must be given an antidote to calm him down. Too much in the tails causes them to 'fly through the air at night, [754]
gleaming, and throttle the cows'. This is the danger of *inyifwila*, that it may act like the pythons in the bellies of witches and kill men and cattle. Controlled by a chief it is held to be reasonably safe, though Kalobo, Mwaipopo's (116) second wife, who was grumbling because no tail had been lodged in her house was told that she did not know how lucky she was for '*inyifwila* is very fearful—it enters the belly, it makes itself into familiars'.

The use of *inyifwila* is forbidden to commoners. In Ngonde, with its hierarchy of chiefs, it was the danger of attempting to equal one of superior rank that was emphasized. 'If a commoner sprinkles *inyifwila* on himself saying, "Let me surpass my fellows", [688]
and he meets a chief (who is entitled to use it) then he dies immediately because he said to himself, "I also am a chief" '; and 'If an Ngana chief dances and sprinkles his spear with *inyifwila* . . . and then meets Kyungu, he dies.' In the more democratic atmosphere of BuNyakyusa chiefs were 'very angry' if commoners used it, but it was the danger of its acting like witchcraft and throttling men and cattle and, eventually, its owner, that men spoke of most. [754]
We heard of half a dozen men—among them the most successful trader of Selya—who were reputed to use it 'to surpass their fellows' and 'get rich' and one case actually came to Court. Mwaipopo, the chief (116), raised the matter himself:

> Why does this thing go about at night? I have seen it myself, it shines, I know it. It is that with which the doctors treat us chiefs to make us impressive [i.e. *inyifwila*]. Do you not know, you commoners, that we chiefs have prohibited its use in our countries? Ask your fellow Mandala! He is bad, he planted this thing, it kills you people.

So two village headmen went and called Mandala who lived near Ngulyo, and brought him to Court. There he was asked: 'Why did you keep this which kills people?' Mandala denied vehemently saying, 'I have not planted this.' But Mwaipopo

643 replied: 'Why does he deny it? He told me once: "I have a thing
778 which kills people!"' Then, turning to the man: 'Go and fetch it
out into the light.' Mandala went and we heard that he brought
● 789 out another medicine, not the one asked for, he brought it to the
[754] headmen and Mwaipopo. Mwaipopo (who, being a chief, knew *inyifwila*) rejected the one Mandala brought saying: 'This is not it.' Then Mandala brought out another and again the chief rejected it saying: 'This is not the one we want.' Then he brought out a little bag made of bark-cloth. They sought a doctor to clear it out. All this happened in secret; we heard of it but did not see it. But in Court Mwaipopo turned Mandala out of his country 'because he had admitted that he was wicked', and Mwaipopo reminded the other chiefs in Court of a previous case of a man in Mwangomo's country who had used this medicine.

Inyifwila is made out of a python 'as thick as a man's thigh' which has been killed by crawling over razors. In Ngonde we were told:

> A certain snake they call *ngone* is killed in the hills to the west. They build a hut, closed, with a man inside ringing a cow bell and razors all over the roof. The snake comes and crawls over the roof, trying to get in and so dies. Then the doctors come to 'close it up'. When they have done so they cut it up for medicine—*inyifwila*; some is brought to Kyungu direct . . . some is taken to the doctors, and it is the doctors who give it to the chief.

A similar story was told in BuNyakyusa but they got their
[825] *inyifwila* from the Sangu and Hehe, to the north and east, not from the west, and in their account the trap was baited with a goat, not a man, and it was the blood of the python (*isota*) shed on the surrounding grass and on the trap itself which was used for
[787] medicine. To test the medicine the doctors gave a little to a chicken; if the chicken died the medicine was satisfactory; and the remains of the chicken were burnt and the ashes used as tested *inyifwila*.

'That snake is awful (*nisya fijo*), no one approaches to kill it.
[825] No! If it were speared everyone would die.' And because the python which is so terrible is thought to be linked with the rain-
[821] bow it, too, is disliked. 'We fear the rainbow very much, we say it appears when a python looks up to the sky; if we are near a river we run from it for pythons live near rivers. . . . No, we are not mistaken, it is so.' The essential quality of the python is *ubusisya* (fearfulness, majesty, dignity) and this is what is required

in rulers and is thought to be transferred to them in the medicine brewed out of python blood. 643 778 789

It will be noticed that the central mystery of Lubaga and the sources of the most powerful medicine are the same, and the medicine is akin to witchcraft. The shades, medicines, and witchcraft are distinguished and are thought to operate independently, but they are all manifestations of a mystical power which is logically one, though none of our informants saw it as that.

We referred earlier to the function of the chiefs' medicines in giving courage in war and luck in raiding. Certain emblems of [293] chieftainship are carried in war: a sacred spear, a bamboo trumpet [721] (*ililonge*) or a great war-horn (*ingangabwite*), and several giraffe or zebra tails (*imiswigala*), and all of these have little horns filled with *inyifwila* attached to them. Of the trumpet it was said: 'You hear it and your heart swells and a great trembling comes over you and you fight.' 'The chiefs forbid them to be blown now because their blowing always brings war.' Each of the senior village headmen is given a tail at the 'coming out' and he went into battle with it bound on to his upper arm. A notable warrior was sometimes given one also. To lose a tail in battle was comparable to losing the regimental colours and there are epics of [726] their loss and recovery. If the leader who carried it saw that he was surrounded he would try to pass it back, or he might hide it on the ground:

> then that night they would go back to the spot and they would find it because it shone with a light and made a bubbling noise, *burukut, burukut, burukut*. . . . [774]
>
> In the old days the medicine [in the tails] was frequently renewed; for there was war, and it gave the headmen the power of dreaming of the course of war. . . . But now, since you have brought peace to the land, no one renews it, and it has gone rotten.

However, the tails in Mwaipopo's chiefdom *were* thus treated in December 1937, and we saw it done. The four tails, with six tiny medicine horns and a calabash of medicated ointment, were formally handed over to the care of Kalinga, Mwaipopo's (116) chief wife, having previously been in the care of his mother. Mwaipopo himself was there with two kinsmen and the three commoner priests Kissogota, Njobakosa, and Ngulyo, but not Kasitile (86) since he was 'father-in-law' to Kalinga and could not meet her, though he was informed of the ritual. Kalobo, the second senior wife, looked on. Kalinga poured out the ointment

643 and Mwaipopo and Kissogota smeared it over the tails which 778 were then put out with the horns to dry in the sun. Mwaipopo suggested getting Mwaisyelage, the doctor, to treat them 789 further, and the others agreed saying: 'Let Mwaipopo find someone, that the earth may be good, that it be heavy.' Njobakosa had spoken earlier of the cattle giving much milk after the treatment of the tails. And they went on to discuss the fact that the young chief Mwankuga II (151) had begotten no child by the wife inherited from his elder brother (150) whose place he had taken. Thus the function of the chief in creating plenty and [842] fertility was in the priests' minds, and there may be some link between the virility of the chief and success in war—one informant spoke of the chief's senior wives jumping over the tails immediately after the consummation of their marriage—but of this we are not certain. What is common knowledge is that the tails are 'for seizing cattle', and they are associated with 'manure and blood'. We were told at the conclusion of the ritual: 'Formerly we should have gone tomorrow, after this treating of the tails, to fight.'

Besides medicines for majesty, courage, and popularity as rulers, chiefs use medicines to protect themselves against the fearfulness of the groves in which they sacrifice, medicines to 'close the country to hunger', to make their capitals grand, and to cause thieves who have stolen, to walk round and round until caught.

Medicines are regarded as essential to authority, victory, and successful rule, and the kind used and the dose given are adjusted to the status and character of the individual. 'Village headmen [622] do not drink the most important *ikingila*; they drink a lesser one, *imbinga*; the senior headman is given most, the junior less.' And the chief's wives do not drink *ikingila* at all, but only a powder suitable for them. But the use of these medicines has its dangers. The chief, like other people who have been drinking protective medicines, does not eat the new crops grown on fields fertilized [754] by ash without fortifying himself. The danger is said to come from the burnt rubbish heaps, because medicines for defence against witches and sorcerers are burnt in them and, as we have seen, certain of the medicines which the chief uses create a power akin to witchcraft. He tastes the new millet ritually in June, the cow [789] peas in September, and pumpkin leaves in November; and he also tastes the 'new earth' at the break of the rains in October or early November. 'We chiefs fear that the medicines we have drunk will

turn round in the belly; people say the earth will go bad in us.' 643
'A child who has drunk medicines will be ill, the smell of the new 778
food or the wet earth goes to the belly.' 789

[788] The chief eats the first fruits and medicines with the commoner who lies down with him at the commencement of his 'coming out' and 'is his wife to taste with him the first fruits and powdered medicines' and is 'fearful' like the medicines. He is identified with [644] the chief's body and may be compared with the *isithununu* of the Pondo chief[1] or the *insila* of the Swazi.[2] His function is to protect the chief against the medicines themselves.

(*c*) DEATH AND BURIAL OF A CHIEF

Both because of a chief's descent, and because of his use of 643
medicines, mystical power resides in his body. 763
766

In the old days a ruling chief was not allowed to die, but was buried while still living, because they feared that if he became unconscious before death he would take away all the food with him, and great hunger would come on us. Men feared *ifingila* medicine in his belly. They said: 'If he dies naturally many of his people will die. . . . He should go alive.' And formerly they buried him with the son of a commoner, also alive, for they said, 'Let him enjoy the company of his man on the road.' When a chief was sick before the coming out of his sons they tried to keep him alive if possible, but if he was clearly going to die then they buried him like this; after the coming out they hastened his death—but only if he were ill. That was why the chiefs fear the 'coming out' of their sons so greatly. Had Mwaipopo lived in the old days and his heir been alive he would have been buried during his last illness.

When a ruling chief was sick the village headmen sent the chief's wives away and looked after him themselves. Then, if they thought he would, or should, die, they tore off all his nails, those of his toes and those of his fingers, and pulled out his hair, and put them in a pot. After that they buried him by night still alive, with a live person, the child of a commoner whom they had seized very secretly. The pot stayed in the house of the senior wife of the chief who had died, and [778] they said, 'It is the chief, we are with him still.' This was the sacred pot for the sacred beer.[3] They kept silence about the death for a month or perhaps two months, saying: 'Let the chief go away first.'

And when a younger brother, a junior chief, died, though he died

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[1] M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 390.

[2] H. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 78.

[3] Kasitile flatly denied this, *vide infra*, p. 64.

643 As we have seen, the chief's fearsome medicine *inyifwila* is
778 thought to be very dangerous, and too much in the tails may cause
622 them 'to fly about throttling men and cattle', but a chief is never
[754] accused of working witchcraft; it is inconceivable to the Nyakyusa
that he could be. If the tails have got out of hand they are treated
[789] by a doctor 'to close them up'; no one suggests that the chief should
get rid of them. It is commoners, 'black people', who are witches—cannibals, the eaters of raw flesh—as opposed to chiefs who, since the dawn of history, have killed cattle for meat and cooked their food like civilized men. But the distinction does not extend very far; junior kinsmen of the chief are 'commoners' and may well be accused of practising witchcraft.

There was a delicate balance of power in the Nyakyusa con-
[182] stitution between hereditary chief and commoner headmen and
the belief in the power of medicines and of witchcraft was an integral part of it. The chief provided fruitfulness by the power of his own body and his medicines; all men depended upon him for their well-being—food, cattle, children, success in war; but he in his turn depended upon the goodwill of his men led by their village headmen; without it he shivered and fell ill, only to be buried by them 'with the breath still in his body' lest the power of growth disappear with his breathless corpse.

Something of the quality of this mutual dependence and fear is conveyed in Kasitile's account of his own illness quoted in Chapter VIII.

(*e*) THE NECESSITY FOR HARMONY

182 The welfare of the chiefdom is thought to depend upon
643 harmony between the chief and his village headmen and priests,
622 and also between the chief and his kinsmen. Any friction between
793 them may result in public misfortune as well as sickness to the
individual at fault. The quarrel of Kasitile, the priest, first with
[753] the Kinga priests, and then with the commoner priests of Mwai-
[821] popo's chiefdom was believed to affect the crops and the weather,
as well as Kasitile's own health (*vide infra*, pp. 124-41), and
Mwaipopo's failure to tell Kasitile formally of the death of their
[688] kinsman led to rain which spoiled the funeral dance. A quarrel
between the lineages of two chiefs which should have sacrificed
643 together was said to have been followed by a very poor millet
602 crop (*vide infra*, pp. 79-80, 118, 136).

578 How the personal relationship of a chief with his kinsmen is

thought to affect the whole country was illustrated in Mwaihojo's 643
chiefdom where the people were plagued by wild pig destroying 602
their gardens. Mwaihojo (147) had a longstanding quarrel with 578
his half-brother, Mwakyonde (148), whose country he had seized
after their 'coming out'. Mwakyonde became famous as a doctor,
and he was a great raconteur and beer-drinker, a regular Silenus, [157]
the boon companion of many influential men, whereas his brother
was cold and irascible; so although he had lost his chieftaincy,
Mwakyonde had considerable power. In February 1937, four
lions were seen in the adjoining chiefdom of Mwaipopo (116),
and we heard pig squealing as it was killed. Angombwike (whose
father lived near Mwakyonde in Mwaihojo's country) explained
to us: 'People say that these are Mwakyonde's lions. . . . Lion- [754]
makers have bundles of twigs which they put into the long grass, [789]
and which turn into lions. Long ago Mwakyonde made lions and
they came and killed all the pigs, and the country (Mwaihojo's)
was at peace, but he quarrelled with Mwaihojo and put his
bundles of twigs into his box and locked it up. Then the country
was filled with pig, and buck, and elephant, and all the crops were
spoiled, and so it is still. Now Mwakyonde has begun to be
friendly with Mwaipopo (116); they enjoy each other's company
and drink beer together, and so he is making lions again in
Kipungu, the land where Mwaipopo is hoeing, to kill the pig for
Mwaipopo. They say Mwaipopo has given him a country in
secret.' Now Mwaihojo claimed as his the forest country, which
Mwaipopo's men had begun to colonize, therefore to aid Mwai-
popo there was an effective slap at Mwaihojo. The lions came into
Mwaihojo's country—we heard them repeatedly close to our
camp—but they did not clear the pig.

Then, in March, Mwakyonde was supposed to be using a new [778]
medicine he had obtained to scare off pig from the fields. We
asked him about it. 'Oh, it has failed. The pigs are still there
eating. I've done everything I should but without effect. I think [775]
that the pigs are possessed by the shades (*sili nimindu ingulube*).'
'Why?' we asked. 'Because my elder brother (Mwaihojo) and I
are not on good terms (*tutikwangala kanunu*) the shades are angry.'

So the destruction of men's gardens was traced to the quarrel between the chief and his brother.

631 north the Nyakyusa were continually at war; they did not trade
782 or pray with them. Thus we conclude that participation in a
[721] common ritual is, in the Nyakyusa case, directly linked with a
common origin and essential trade.

643 The divine kings, Lwembe and Kyungu, were regarded as
having power over certain areas, a power closely linked with
● [789] rainfall. Indeed, one informant argued that the chiefs living
[782] around Masoko had never sent sacrifices to Lubaga, 'because when
it rains at Lubaga the rain does not come as far as Masoko'. He
[821] was mistaken in his facts—the chiefs of Masoko did at one time
send to Lubaga as Mwambete (162), chief at Masoko, himself
admitted—but the argument points to a conception of supernatural power tied to a rainfall area. This notion was not, however, applied consistently.

643 The balance between secular and mystical power has altered
173 during the past ten generations. The founding heroes, Lwembe
and Kyungu, came as conquerors and must surely have led their men personally; but early in the history of Ngonde the Kyungu was secluded, and power was exercised almost exclusively by the nobles (*vide supra*, pp. 40-46); and the Lwembe also was, at one period, 'not seen by ordinary men' and led a life hedged about with taboos. There is sharp contrast in Nyakyusa tradition between the active chiefs who were warriors, and arbitrators, and worked hard in their fields[1] and the 'divine king' who lived in seclusion. As we have seen, the chiefs often delegated ritual functions, with the taboos involved, to a junior kinsman such as Mwamukinga (44) or Mwakihaba (45) (*vide* pp. 79-81, 114) whose heirs succeeded to the office. It is even possible that the
[178] first Lwembe at Lubaga (Mwakalebela 19) took over ritual
functions from his senior brother, Kalesi (18).[2] The present tendency is for the development of secular power and its separation from mystical power. The Kyungu is no longer a god but an administrator: the heir of the Lwembes sits as an elected representative of chiefs on the Local Council. In the traditional
182 Nyakyusa society ritual played an essential part in maintaining
177 the balance between generations, sections, and social strata, and in

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[1] In 1955 a young chief was bitterly criticized by his men because he 'never had a hoe in his hands' whereas his father and grandfather had (to our personal knowledge) been diligent in hoeing.

[2] But according to one excellent informant, Mwakisambwe (30) lived secluded while Mwakilima (31) 'fed men'—i.e. entertained.

CHAPTER VIII

RAIN-MAKING AND 'SPRINKLING THE HOMESTEADS'

● 789 Two activities which are closely linked with sacrifice at the groves of chiefs, but which are distinguished from them because they consist in the manipulation of medicines, rather than prayers and oblations, are 'rain-making' and 'sprinkling the homesteads' to ensure fertility of the soil.

(*a*) RAIN MAGIC

791 Rain-makers (*abapelafula*) are men who use perforated instruments called 'rain' (*ifula*) to produce rain or sunshine. The heroes were believed to create rain by the virtue in their own bodies, but the Kyungu also had a much prized instrument of iron, perforated [778] 'like a mouth organ', and several of the chiefs had perforated stones which were used to 'make rain'. In most cases the care of them was delegated to a junior kinsman, a commoner, or (in Ngonde) even a slave, but often the office became hereditary and rain-makers were men of considerable power. Such was Kasitile whose grandfather (44), a younger brother of the chief Mwamukinga (43), had been entrusted with his rain stones. The Kyungu was thought to control the rain in the whole of the Ngonde plain, the Lwembe in an area less clearly defined, but which included Selya, BuKinga, and parts of the Nyakyusa plain, Kyala in the eastern portion of the Nyakyusa plain, and parts of BuKinga and BuKisi. Chiefs were credited with making local rain, in their own countries.

789 778 The technique of 'making' rain was to seal the holes in the perforated instruments with ointment and immerse them in water.

> The rain instrument that helped Kyungu was called Mulima. Its holes were its eyes. If they were empty it would be empty in the sky above also, there would be no clouds; if some were full then there would be a few clouds, if all were full then there would be many clouds and rain. If it were raining and he put it in a tree so that its eyes looked up, then the sun would shine. . . . If he opened its eyes that they might be empty and put it in a tree so that it looked up then the clouds dried up above, the sky also became empty.

The imagination of the Nyakyusa doctor who invented this 789
magic was near enough to that of Shakespeare to be intelligible to 778
an Englishman. The sun is an 'eye'. Clouds may close it. Holes in a rain instrument are also 'eyes' and if these are closed the 'eye of heaven' will also shut—with clouds.

The Kyungu seems to have kept Mulima (which was only 'the size of a spectacle case') on him, but the ordinary instruments—stones—were left in the chiefs' groves with potsherds in which they were immersed in water when required.

> Kyungu Mwakabange had his rain-makers Mugoma and Komanga. Mugoma was a slave, Komanga a man of Ngonde. When the sky was hard he sent a message to them saying: 'Put them into water.' If there were too much rain he said: 'Take them out.' Each had two potsherds with two stones for each. To make rain they rubbed the stones with mutton fat and a medicine called *ilifugo* (fertility) and put them into the sherds and poured water over them.

Godfrey Wilson was taken by Kasitile to see his rain stones in the grove near his house in April 1935. Kasitile addressed his shades:[1]

> My fathers, do not be angry. *Mwakalebela* (19) (he spat), *Mwanjala* (23), *Mwakisambwe* (30), *Mwakilima* (31), *Mwamapondele* (27), *Mwakibaba* (45), *Mwamakinga* (44), Mwakabange (58), Mwakagile (59), Mwandemele (?), Mwakanjoki (60), Mwaijonga (82), Mwafongo (83), Mwamwila (84), Mwakabule (117), Mwaipopo (115), these are our friends (repeated urgently), you did not know them, you feared them, but now we do not fear them, they have come and met with us as friends. [782]

There was a large broken pot and three stones, two of them with holes an inch or so in diameter. There used to be five stones—two had been stolen by the Ngoni when they raided this country. When he wishes to make rain, water drawn from a waterfall is brought by Kasitile's wife and left overnight in the grove. Then he pours it into the pot and puts in the stones . . . 'the water bubbles; it is cold, but it seems to boil and the *ifala* go whirling and knocking against the sides of the pot.' . . . The bubbling of the water is compared with rain. Kasitile did not know where his stones had come from. Mwakisambwe his great-grandfather had

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[1] The names italicized are those G.W. actually heard in the grove; the whole list was given by Kasitile afterwards as names he had mentioned, but in fact he had not mentioned more than eight.

789 them first, then his grandfather, and father. Others told us that
rain stones always came from Kisi country, a very wet strip of
778 land on the north-east shore of the Lake where the clouds always
seem to gather when one looks south from the Nyakyusa valley
and plain, and a piece of perforated wood used in Ngonde for
making rain came from the hills of Misuku, also a very wet
country. Kasitile's stones were of two types, but no direct associa-
tion of male and female was made. However, the Kukwe spoke
of a 'mother' stone having young. 'The rain-maker puts back the
stone in the potsherd without water (after rain has come) and
going later he finds that it has got young, perhaps seven, with the
mother there are eight.'

The rain-makers are subject to certain taboos: during the dry
791 season they may not wash lest they drive away the rain nor do they
[784] shave for 'they compare hair and clouds saying, "Let it be black",
they compare a bald pate with sunshine.' And the rain-maker
[262] may not eat roasted maize 'for as the maize crackles in the pot-
sherd when it is roasted, so the thunder will crackle in the sky'.
He may not eat green maize (which is reaped during the rains)
until the dry weather begins 'because he creates rain, which
means he creates all the food which grows with the rain'. If he
begins eating too soon he may stop the growth. And when the
rain-maker is manipulating his instruments a sex taboo is observed.
[834] 'When I am making rain,' said Kasitile, 'I do not sleep with my
wives for two days, it's taboo. How would Kyala help us if I did?'

In theory the rain-maker always works under the direction of
[643] the political authority—the Kyungu or a chief—but he is also
thought to wreak vengeance on those who anger him. Kasitile
was critical of his colleague in the hills above Isumba: 'He never
makes a nice gentle rain, it always destroys food. . . . He is always
demanding things from men, and, if they refuse, he brings his
rain to destroy things. . . . There is a very strong wind and heavy
rain which takes roofs off houses.' But when Kasitile himself was
[964] angry, because his son was taken as a tax defaulter to work on the
[687] roads, the weather grew bad.

> 789 People say I am angry, that this rain is because they came and beat
> me because of tax. This time the tax collectors came to my place and
> beat me and when I thought, 'It is not the custom with our forefathers
> for the tax collectors to come at all to men like me', I grew angry and
> prayed. . . . When I was in MuNgonde the country suffered from
> hunger, all their children were in trouble. . . . Then I came up, and

began to prepare my rain, and made the country good. Food started 789 to be plentiful. Why should I be treated thus? I asked. And the shades [775] and Kyala heard me, so it rained *heavily* (too much). Do I grow angry by my own power? I do, and I put the rain stones in water, and when Kyala hears me then it rains too much, my anger has results; but if Kyala does not agree then, when I go the next day to the grove, I find there is no water in the potsherd. . . . I work by Kyala's power; when water is in the sherd I know it is he who has helped me. . . . We don't do it ourselves, it rains if the shades and Kyala help us. I cannot say that I do things alone without their help, it is they who give me breath (*umbepo*) and when they help I feel the power, the rain will fall very heavily. . . .

The way in which the weather was connected by the people of Selya with Kasitile is illustrated by the following entry in Godfrey Wilson's note-book:

Mwaipopo the *chief* had omitted to tell Kasitile formally that their kinsman, Mwaikyambe, had died. Kasitile had come to the funeral in the morning, and gone off in a huff saying, 'They did not tell me.' [689] Mwaipopo then sent Ngulyo (the priest) after him with 1s. to pacify him. 'Yes, he paid because he had wronged his father.' Kasitile accepted the 1s. and came back. There had been rain during the night, but the early morning was fine. About 11 a.m. it began to rain, softly at first and then hard. I was in Mwaipopo's house drinking beer. They discussed the rain, hinting that it was caused by Kasitile. 'That Kasitile' was the most direct hint I heard. But they discussed the fact that 'this morning it was raining at Kasitile's,' i.e. that the rain began there and spread over the country. The rain was coming from that direction, it was true, but the morning at Kasitile's had been fine. Ngulyo said, 'When I got to Kasitile's place there was rain.' Suddenly there was a hush and someone whispered: 'Ssh! He is at the door, he is coming in', and Kasitile came in. Mwaipopo apologized again, through Ngulyo, for having omitted to call him: 'I had just got back from Tukuyu, I was surprised that no one had told you, Mwakisumbwe (identifying Kasitile with his great-grandfather 30). You too, Ngulyo and Kimagesa, are at fault, you should have told him. When I got to the funeral this morning and was told that Mwakisumbwe had gone away again saying no one had told him then I sent you to tell him.' All this was said in a rather plaintive voice to Ngulyo, Kasitile being next Ngulyo. Kasitile said nothing. At noon, when we got up and went out, the rain had lessened, and it stopped almost at once. On my way back from the funeral later, I heard one of the young men, a son of Mwaipopo, who was with me, say to the other: 'Kasitile has forgiven, but only partially, the rain has spoilt the ritual.' About 1 p.m. the

● 789 rain started again and it rained for an hour during the division of the meat; then again it lessened and stopped.

A showery and varied day was turned to account by Kasitile. The way he did it was to keep quite silent about the rain and about the insult, but let the others talk. No one directly connected the rain with him in his presence, but they talked about how heavy it was, now and again. If there is too much or too little rain, or Kasitile is known to be angry the weather is noticed and connected with him. The conclusion that Kasitile sometimes deliberately played up to the credulity of his neighbours is irresistible. But when there was a drought he grew very troubled. In January 1938 there was drought in Mwaipopo's country though in some of the neighbouring chiefdoms there had been heavy rain. We went with Kasitile to visit his fellow priest, Mwamakunda, in the bush country. There was discussion about the drought.

KASITILE: I have put in the rain stones, but nothing has happened, I tremble!

[787] THE OTHERS: Kijaja went into a trance and said: 'Let a cow come from Mwakilaba (45). Mwakilima (31) has driven away his senior kinsmen and refused to send a cow, he has refused to return the cow which was given him by his senior brother. Let him return it, instead of saying: "Let the nasty old man (*ikongole*) celebrate there at his place." Then if it comes there will be much rain and food.' [i.e. Kijaja attributes the

[688] drought to the refusal of the junior line of chiefs to send the customary cow for the sacrifice at Mbyanga, *vide supra*, pp. 79-80].

[787] KASITILE: Kijaja has gone into a trance and prophesied just recently. Kyala has brooded over him recently, he is a new prophet, but I, Kasitile, have not heard [i.e. have not been formally notified]. Had we been together with Kijaja I would have argued with him and silenced him. See! In Mwakilaba's country it has rained; it has rained heavily there, but not here. I would have said: 'Kijaja you are a new prophet. . . .' But I don't know about this rain. . . . Had I consulted an oracle the cause would have come to light.

MWAMAKUNDA (came and sat down): What about this rain? Have you put them in water?

KASITILE: Yes, I have put them in water and nothing happens, I put them in water and nothing happens. I have not consulted an oracle about this rain. . . . I tremble. . . .

MWAMAKUNDA: Yes, indeed! Consult an oracle. . . . Then you did put them in water. . .?

KASITILE: They have lain there two weeks, but the rain refuses to come.

. . . I put the stones into water, it is as if someone spilt it out, the 789
sherd dries up. . . . Now Kyala has gone away, the shades have fled,
formerly they clapped their hands (indicating satisfaction). . . . There [775]
is something about which the shade is angry, because in this homestead we were accustomed to pray frequently. . . . If I boast saying: 'It will rain tomorrow', will it rain?

MWAMAKUNDA THE YOUNGER (gravely, and with hesitation): No, not if Kyala does not wish.

WIFE OF MWAMAKUNDA: But formerly it agreed [i.e. the rain came].

A day or two later Kasitile came in, during the evening, with Mwalusanye, a young doctor, the son of doctors.

K.: This rain, do you not ask about it?

G.W.: Have you been to consult the oracle?

K.: Yes. I consulted it the day before yesterday.

G.W.: What did it say?

K.: It said: 'Your fathers are angry, and Kyala and the Holy Spirit [775]
(*NuMbepo Musikemo*)!' [776]

G.W.: What do they say we have done wrong?

K.: Since Mwaipopo received a Court what have the chiefs given us to say 'We did wrong?' Did they give me a cow? They did not. [Here Kasitile was referring to the insult to Lubaga, *vide supra*, pp. 55-6, and he identifies himself with the priests of Lubaga.] In MuNgonde I was a commoner, I ate meat, here I live hungry.

G.W.: And now who will speak out about this matter?

K.: You, you tell Mwaipopo 'Ask Pikumbalna (Kasitile 86) why this rain does not come, what has happened to it?'

G.W. refused and asked: Who should suggest this according to custom?

K.: Mwamakunda.

MWALUSANYE: Because according to custom, Mwaipaja (G.W.), if [177]
things were as they are with us now, if the rain refused, our fathers [688]
came to Kasitile (60), the father of this one, to ask him saying, 'Kasitile what has happened to the rain?' But now that our fathers are dead, we are bad, we do not ask.

And a few days later the chief said: We have thrown away our food, it's drying up in the ground . . . this drought! Kasitile says: 'It has defeated me . . . the shades (*imindu*) have caught hold of us.' Perhaps they claim a cow, perhaps it is because Mwaihojo (147) and his fellows paid here. . . . But those beneath are angry (pointing downwards and speaking with conviction), the owner is angry.

The rain-maker therefore is not conceived of as working independently; the goodwill of the shades of the chief is necessary, [775]
and perhaps also those of the rain-maker himself, though this is [177]
not quite clear. Nowadays, at least, Kyala is also invoked. In

789 drought, as in illness, a number of possible causes are discussed,
[775] and if one possible cause is dealt with and yet the drought persists,
another will be put forward. A shrewd priest or doctor can turn
[177] this to account and find many reasons for the failure of his ritual, as the following case shows.

789 In the wet Nyakyusa valley rain-makers are not concerned
only with drought, but also with flood, and, in the years 1935-8,
791 with the rise in the level of the Lake which inundated many
gardens.[1] On the Nyakyusa plain the rise was attributed to the
[821] action of a Kisi doctor, Mwatabi, who had first boasted that he could bring up the Lake and then been commissioned by the chief, Mwakalukwa (141), to do so, 'because there was much grass by the Lake and many mosquitoes, and it was dirty there'. He was told to 'take the Lake up a bit, but not too far' and given a sheep. Then, the following season, in April (a month of torrential rain), Mwakalukwa's son Mwakisisile (170, for Mwakalukwa himself had died) gave him a little bull saying,

> [578] Send the Lake back, it has come too far. Then the doctor went home thinking to himself, 'Why does he give me such a little bull?' and he met a headman of the neighbouring chief, Mwakabulufu (138), and said, 'Why should I send the Lake back, Mwakisisile has given me a bull only; had he given me a cow, I'd have done so, but now I am angry.' Then Mwakabulufu heard and sent a message to say he would provide a cow, since Mwakalukwa was dead. But the doctor refused: 'No, Mwakalukwa (the son, 170) is still alive, he must give it.' The following September, before the usual end of the dry season, there was rain on the plain. It is the Kisi's rain. Mwakisisile (170) refused to give him anything, he said he was a liar, but the commoners collected 30s. and a goat, and the Kisi performed a ritual just recently, and said: 'The Lake will go back, but my strength will bring the rain; it will rain during the dry season this month.' We laughed very much in Tukuyu to hear such a prophecy, but it is raining!

The following year—after the Lake had risen again—another reason was given. It was said that a rain-maker at Bojo in Kisi country had died, and just before he died he had thrown a rain stone into the Lake.

(*b*) MAGIC OF FERTILITY

789 We did not learn very much about 'sprinkling the homesteads';

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[1] There is a periodic rise and fall in the level of the Lake. In 1937 the Lake steamer was anchoring in what had been the [illegible] of the District Commissioner's house at Karonga.

it was something done secretly, at night, and feared by everyone. 789 Ambilikile related how, as a small boy growing up on the plain, he had been severely beaten by his mother when he called out one night, hearing a noise in the bananas, for it was made by the doctor 'sprinkling the homesteads'. The doctor heard and entered their hut angrily, and seized some of the calabashes. The medicine for sprinkling sometimes—probably always—contained human flesh, hence the anxiety of mothers not to draw the attention of the fearful doctor to their children. In Selya, after the sacrifice at Lubaga, the Kinga returned to Kasitile's homestead to sprinkle a medicine which contained the flesh of the child they had killed for the drum, and Mwamakunda (his assistant) went round by night pruning the bananas throughout Mwaipopo's country with [778] a sacred knife, which was kept in Kasitile's homestead and Kasitile put porridge of banana flour, made from a stem of bananas provided by the chief's senior wife, in the grove called Kinyangwa ('the porridge of banana flour') near his house. Then fertility was said to spread from Kasitile's throughout the country. According to Kasitile himself, the medicine contained an ingredient he did not know . . .

> My elder brother died without showing me the tree. . . . Mwamakunda does not know it either, he just got it from my father. We hope that it will appear in a dream, but it has not yet been revealed. . . . We dreamed of a cow, and of Mwaipaja (G.W.), but the medicine was not seen. I will seek another from a doctor . . . perhaps from Misuku.[1]

At this time also, in some—perhaps all—chiefdoms millet was taken from the sacred pot containing the 'power of growth', i.e. [778] the hair and nails of the dead chiefs (*vide supra*, pp. 64-5) to mix with the millet seed about to be planted.

Besides this secret and fearsome 'sprinkling' on behalf of chiefdoms, there was a much more open use of medicines for fertility by village groups, when they burnt the rubbish heaps in which they planted millet,[2] and by private individuals in their own fields.

During the hot weather a chief sometimes sends to all the 784 villages of his chiefdom a man, curiously dressed in a cap 789 and jerkin of banana leaves, who forbids people to cut their bananas, or even leaves of banana stems that have not

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[1] A district famous for its medicines.

[2] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 53-4.

784 yet fruited, and tells them to eat beans, sweet potatoes, and cow peas instead. The owner of a grove can cut a stem of bananas only
● 789 with the permission of the man who proclaims the prohibition (*ugwa lusingo*), and those who trespass pay him a fine of a hen, a knife, a pot, or their sleeping mats. The avowed purpose is that 'bananas should ripen in all the homesteads and the country appear rich and productive', but there may be further implications which we did not discover.

illness to neglect of his duty to the Kinga. All the time we were 793
in BuNyakyusa he was ailing—possibly he suffered from tuber- 755
culosis—and one wrongdoing after another was suggested as the [753]
cause of his illness.

His case is intelligible only in terms of the conception of 'the
breath of men', that is, a power akin to witchcraft thought to be [754]
legitimately exercised by village headmen and others to punish
wrongdoers, but which is referred to by the victims as 'witchcraft'.
This has been discussed at length elsewhere.[1]

On 2nd July 1935, Kasitile had left his own house and was 793
living with a friend in a neighbouring village. His doctor, Mwa- 754
kyonde, said that he was being 'throttled by the witches' and had
invited him to come and recollect himself (*ukwipelekesya*) in the
tranquillity of a village of another chiefdom in which there were
many people with spiritual power (*abamanga*) so that 'the witches'
could not get at him. This is a common precaution in case of
illness, for witches are thought not to have power ordinarily
outside their own village and never beyond the chiefdom.[2]

The cause of the illness was explained as follows: Kasitile had [578]
quarrelled with Kissogota, the commoner priest, and others of the
principal men of the country, because he had found them drinking [753]
the sacred beer (*ubwikemo*), brewed after the millet harvest (*vide
supra*, pp. 84-5) without telling him, or sending him the pot
which was his due. They invited him to drink, but he refused and
they each sent him 1*s.* to beg pardon. Kasitile bought beer with
one of the shillings and called the senior commoner priest,
Ngulyo, and his fellows to drink saying, 'I was angry, friends, you
"overstepped" me' (i.e. they had ignored his rights). He himself [689]
should have brewed when he confessed his anger, and slaughtered
a calf or prepared food for them as well, but he had bought only
one shilling's worth of beer and provided nothing himself. Then,
when they had drunk, Kasitile fell ill. Hence it was said that the
commoner priests were angry and 'ate' (i.e. bewitched) him.
Kasitile's own comment was: 'The fault lies with the young
priests (Ngulyo, a young man, had inherited his father's position),
they are useless as priests . . . I was not told of that ritual beer, yet
the medicine comes from me, from this home where I keep it.
They should have come to me to get it and put it with the millet [731]
in the holy pot. They drank the beer without medicine. It is they
who have brought cold and hunger on the country. I think the [789]

[1] Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 91-121, 167-9.

[2] *op. cit.*, pp. 102-3.

793 trouble is that Mwaipopo (the chief 116) is getting old. . . .'
754 Here Kasitile suggested two different causes for the scarcity in the
[731] country: (*a*) the negligence of the priests, and (*b*) the senility of the
● [789] chief. In the old days Mwaipopo would have been smothered, as
Angombwike explained (*vide supra*, p. 63).

On the 9th, Kasitile, much troubled by his cough at night,
[753] expressed a great desire for the return of the missionary nurse to
[757] Kabembe hospital. 'She is killing us by her absence, the black
people don't know anything about these things, only the Europeans. Why, I went there and the dresser just gave me an injection without taking my temperature—no European ever does that.'

The following day he sent off his sons with 10 c. to inquire about
[787] his case from a diviner. The diviner said: 'The wives at his home
[753] are gossiping to other people about their husband. People want
the husband's body to be light. It is not Jane, because she is his favourite, but the others.' Kasitile said:

> I shan't do anything, I said 'Let's leave it.' I am still in Butola [the village to which he moved for safety]. Mwakyonde is giving me medicine for my disease. It drives out the cold which is in my body. Yes, the cold is the breath of the witches coming to throttle me—it's due to my
> 755 wives' gossip. But it started as a quarrel with other people [non-
> 753 relatives] first. One day I went to drink beer in Bujege and that night I fell sick; that is how it began. Men are complaining because I, a chief, a senior, do not cook food for them. They throttle me on that account. They say: 'Let us see whether he is really a chief, a senior!' But others say: 'He has done no wrong.' Yes, the sickness took me on the way home from the beer. Perhaps Kyala asked: 'What has he
> [776] done?' and found I had done no wrong. If there had not been a Kyala who saves us I would have been dead.
>
> When I consulted a diviner he struck a spear and looked along it,
> [787] then he said: 'The disease now is from his wives—the earlier attack was from men, but this one is from his wives. When they gather at the hearth they say: "Come hither, we see him where he sleeps." '

754 'Are the wives witches?' we asked.
753 Kasitile replied:

> Yes. They say: 'There is a favourite, we are not beloved.' If a man's wives are good the witches can get into the house, but their cold breath dissipates quickly; you are given medicine and recover quickly; but if the wives are bad they gather together the medicine and press it down, so that it is powerless. One of my wives is very bad, her lineage is bad, it is she who calls to her aid the heavy ones, the witches. The

always hangs under the eaves and is only used for prayer, filled it with 783 water and put into it a stone and a live coal from the fire. Then he 782 took some roots from the roof (previously put there ready) and we went off to the same spot as before (*vide supra*, p. 115). Kasitile chewed [778] the root, took water and blew it out, and began to pray:

'Do not be startled, come in your own persons, gather together, [769] with Mwakanjoki (60). You made friends with him before, now he has entered, he has made himself our friend. Indeed I made a mistake, I have come to enter; I cut you on the head, I have done wrong. The sons of Kagile (i.e. 59 + his descendants) complain of me, saying, "It is he who has gone off with the millet, bananas, and maize; and children cry at night behind the huts; we are barren because he has cut Mwakanjoki." I have sought this cow which you wanted. Mwakanjoki (60), Lwembe (3?), Mwakalebela (19), Mwatonoka (29), Mwalubange (58), Mwakagile (59), Mwaijonga (82), Kyala (2), we have come to attend to you (pointing to the grave). Kikungubeja, Nsyanigwa Kyamba Kitali,[1] Lyambilo (12) come to your home if you are at Mwalubange's (58), come if you are at Mwaitende's (61), come Mwakanjoki (60) and the Kinga and Lwembe (3); Mwakalebela (19) come, give me cattle and millet, and the powerful medicine which you had. Since you are brooding over me go out from my body, go out! I pay my debt. We have come to take you to your home since you have gone off in a huff, come! I will never cut your branches again. I fear you and I will respect the branches. Come to your house, that of Mwamaloba (85), of Kanjoki (mother of 60), come. And he (G.W.) is innocent (*mwelu*), do not fear him. He is the owner of the ritual, he is [123] Mwamaloba (85), he is my senior, I am the junior. Sometimes I wish to embrace him, sometimes I fear that he is going to imprison me.[2] May the bananas increase! I am left alone! It is I who am here! Move out of my body! And give us medicine! May the offering increase [789] overnight, may the cattle increase and the maize, and in the morning let me tell Mwaipaja (G.W.) that the bananas and medicine have increased. If there is anything else you are a liar, if this chill begins again then I have gone, I am not here. Amen! (*sic*).'

Very early the following morning the sacrificial bull was killed. [177] Kasitile had arranged that our Mohammedan cook should come to cut its throat.[3] Then, later in the morning, the crucial drinking and 'speaking out' began. Kasitile had provided two pots of beer.

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[1] Three Kinga priests whose names are titles of office.

[2] In the earlier years of our acquaintance Kasitile had denied both the smothering [114] of an ailing chief and human sacrifice for the drum. It is possible that he had co-operated in either one or both of these ritual acts. He himself reported that the Sangu diviner had told him: 'You have a European as a close friend. . . . You enjoy his company much, but there is something left . . .' (i.e. the friendship is not yet complete).

[3] Ostensibly so that he could partake of the meat, but the reason given seemed inadequate.

CHAPTER X

MEDICINES

278 789 755 THE Nyakyusa regard medicines as an ultimate source of power—given the right ingredients and the 'know how' a man may achieve anything. This conception is integral to their view of reality, moreover the distinctions made regarding the just use of them throw light on the Nyakyusa moral system, and must be examined. But a full analysis of Nyakyusa medicines (*imikota*) would require a book in itself together with an expert knowledge of botany and of the properties of plants. Here we are concerned only with those aspects of the belief and practice in medicines which touch directly on social relationships or which illuminate the Nyakyusa conception of reality and morality, and their use of symbols.

Already many references have been made to medicines for they are an adjunct of most rituals, but their use is not confined to these; often a private individual is treated alone, and such a treatment is not classed by the Nyakyusa as a ritual (*ubunyago*), so we must stray, for a little time, beyond the limits of our title.

(*a*) TYPES OF MEDICINES

278 789 A classification in terms of purpose shows a close conformity with the use of medicines by other peoples in Africa. The use of medicines for protection and cure; for fertility; for success in any chancy undertaking from hunting and fishing to love-making, theft, a court case, or securing a job; for exacting vengeance; and for oracles, is familiar enough. What emerges from a detailed analysis is that the intractability of *persons* is felt to be at least as great a problem as the intractability of *things*, and many treatments are directed towards transforming personalities and developing moral qualities. The medicine given to a bride at puberty is to make her 'patient and polite' as well as fertile; the medicines given to chiefs and village headmen are to make them dignified and wise. A thief is often treated with medicines by his relatives to cure him of his thieving habits; and the famous *gwambemula* medicine is used to control the anger of a husband, a chief, an employer, or a superior officer. (It is said to be much in

demand among police and soldiers as well as wives.) Then there 278
are medicines used by men and women to make themselves more 789
attractive and persuasive as lovers, litigants, leaders, clients,
servants, salesmen, and so on.

Certain Nyakyusa medicines are based on observation of cause 278
and effect. Their pharmacopia includes purges and poisons—
for example, castor oil has long been cultivated and used both for
making ointment and as an aperient—and some of the drugs
administered, and the poulticing with hot leaves, may well be
therapeutic; we have no systematic knowledge of the plants used
and cannot assess them. But the scientific element is demonstrably
limited, for a great many medicines are based on the principle [789]
of association, a feeling of likeness between things, and things *felt*
to be alike are believed to react on one another, like producing
like, or like things being antagonistic.

No distinction is made by the Nyakyusa themselves between
those medicines which one trained in western science would say
are based on observation of cause and effect (e.g. a purge or a
poison), and those which are based on association—indeed our
friends constantly cited supposed observations of cause and effect
as evidence of the efficacy of all sorts of medicines and tàboos.
Mwakyonde used charcoal, mixed with iron from a forge, as a
medicine for protection against lightning, burying a little, and [751]
powdering a little, and sprinkling it about a homestead, 'because [821]
at the forge they blow the bellows and it says, "*Muli, muli, muli*"
(i.e. boom, boom, boom) and the lightning *jikumuleka* (booms).
When we blow the bellows at a forge it makes a noise like thunder.'
There was no hint that he was aware that electricity might be
attracted by iron, but he insisted that where he had buried the
charcoal and iron the lightning *never* struck again, and he regarded
this as cause and effect. Therefore the distinction we have made
between observation and association is ours, not theirs.

That the symbolic element is at least as important as the practical 842
was apparent from Lyandileko's treatment for sterility, which was 278
famous for its success. She had three patients one morning, all
women wanting to bear children. In front of her she ranged
seventeen banana petals and mixed four different medicines in
them. Then she chose three young banana shoots and bored a
hole in each, inserting into it a length of the mid-rib of a banana
leaf, slightly hollowed to form a runnel. She told an onlooker to
bring the first petal full of medicine and poured it into the runnel.

753 and achievement. An account of the treatment of a field for
578 protection against wild pig emphasizes this.

If people wish to protect a crop from wild pig they go to a doctor to
789 ask for medicine. When he gives it to them he tells them that there
241 must be no quarrelling in the home after they have barricaded the
[689] field. Four women go to the field with the husband of the one who
cultivates it. They go after sunset. One women is shaved; her head is
a symbol of the garden devastated by pig. A second woman, who keeps
[302] her hair, has a head-pad on her head and carries bananas with medicine.
She enters the field and eats the bananas. The husband climbs
a hill at a little distance, and two of the women go into the long grass
close to the field. The bald pate twists a head-pad and the one with hair
smears it with medicine and as they do so they look towards their
[831] husband and abuse him saying, 'You lay with your mother', and he
swears at them saying, 'The leather aprons of your fathers' . . . and
many other insults. Then the women walk round the edge of the field,
sprinkling medicines, and they go out the way they came in. The
circular pad is a symbol of the barricade placed round the field. When
[262] they return home they do not eat but go to sleep hungry (though the
clever ones eat beforehand). If they quarrel, the pig finishes the food.
It is as if quarrelling destroyed the fierceness, the power, of the protective
medicine; you must put aside all quarrelling that the medicine
may be powerful. If the pigs come it is as if there were a quarrel, so the
woman and her husband quarrel in the field mimicking the pig. The
husband on the hill is like the pig approaching the field, his wives in
the long grass also represent pigs. . . . The husband and his wives
quarrel only in the field. If, when the maize is ripe, the husband beats
one of his wives for any cause she does not go to pick the maize herself,
a friend picks it for her. If she goes in her anger she finds the maize
finished, nothing but earth is left.

789 Here the link between medicines and morality is made plain.
689 Quarrelling weakens medicines of all sorts and renders them
ineffective. But a mimic quarrel between husband and wives in
the fields renders the medicine effective. It represents the battle
between the pig and the medicines. There is a suggestion else-
[775] where (pp. 69, 113) that pigs are *sent* by the shades when kinsmen
or neighbours quarrel, but in the account just quoted it is implied
that quarrelling in the home directly injures the medicine.

In themselves, many medicines are neutral. They may be
278 put to good or evil ends, but because they are mysterious and
754 powerful, they are feared, in the same sort of way as atomic
789 energy is feared in contemporary society. Men use medicines
themselves 'for purely peaceful purposes', but they are shocked at

the prospect of their enemies using them. The notion that medicines 278
are a weapon which may be used rightly or wrongly is very 754
clearly brought out in the attitude towards 'making' animals. If a 789
private individual 'makes' lion, or leopard, or crocodile which
kill men that is sorcery—there is no question about it—and we
heard of at least one man who had been driven from his home [689]
because he was reputed to have made leopards which killed
children and cattle,[1] but when Mwakyonde 'made' lions which
drove off pig and did not attack men, that was a public service
(*vide* p. 69). And when one chief uses lions in his conflict with [726]
another the action is felt to be comparable with war, rather than
murder. In February 1937, four lions were hunting in a piece of
bush country near the salt lick, which two chiefs claimed. 578
Mwansumbwe, a chief from the hills, had sent some of his men to 754
clear fields in the bush, but Mwakagile (50, or his heir), the neighbouring 789
chief, objected saying, 'This is my land.' There was a
long case and finally the District Officer gave judgement in favour [696]
of Mwakagile and refused Mwansumbwe any compensation for
his work in clearing the bush. 'You got a crop for your labour,' he
said. Mwansumbwe was incensed by the judgement and grew
even more angry when his men elected to remain on the land they
had cleared and became men of Mwakagile. So, everyone said,
Mwansumbwe had sought medicines and created these lions.
They killed seven cattle in a few days, attacking even by daylight.
'Yes,' we were told, 'there are always lion in the bush, but they do
not ordinarily kill cattle as they have done now.'

Another chief who tried the same sort of thing was not so successful. 'Some time ago the chief Mwakila made elephants, he turned his wives into elephants and they ate the bananas of Malapula, but Malapula said, "Let's try", and he created much rain which poured down on to the elephants and those wives died. Then Mwakila was defeated. How about you Europeans? Have you this custom? Do you turn a wife into an animal?'

'No!'

'We have it, if I choose I give my wife *isigita* and she becomes a lion which roars, it roars and eats people.'[2]

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 124.

[2] This, and the tale of a young man fleeing from justice who obtained a medicine to turn himself into a lion, were the only accounts of lycanthropy we heard—usually the medicines themselves (such as those of a chief) turn into animals, or the young of ordinary lion, leopard, or crocodile 'smell the medicines' and become attached to the 'owner' who feeds and commands them.

A second class of medicines is not neutral at all, but itself
787 selects between right and wrong. The most famous is the *mwafi*
[278] ordeal which is used to reveal the truth. The *mwafi* poison was formerly administered by a doctor,[1] before witnesses, and the innocent were believed to vomit almost immediately, while the guilty did not vomit at all, or were slow to do so, and fell ill, some even dying. Nowadays *mwafi* is administered only in the greatest secrecy, but various minor methods of divination, all of which turn on the correct use of medicines, are in common use. The 'divination with porridge' has been described (*vide supra*, p. 128). The medicine added to it is spoken of as 'a kind of *mwafi*'. Another method is to rub an inverted wooden cup on a smooth board. Questions are posed, as to the porridge. When the answer is 'no' the cup slips; when the answer is 'yes' the cup sticks. Sometimes a stick of *musika* wood is rubbed on the ground in place of the cup on the board, and there are half a dozen other methods using bells, horns, segments of bamboo, a pipe, or boiling water. In each case virtue lies in the medicines added to the porridge or rubbed on to the cup or stick, and into scarifications in the diviner's hands. An ordinary man who has not been treated cannot use the instruments, and porridge without '*mwafi*' is useless.

751 Certain medicines used for protection and to wreak vengeance,
754 are also thought to be selective, and to injure only the guilty.
● 789 These are horns, owned by doctors. Mwanjesi (who came of a family of doctors) told us:

> [778] My father had a water-buck horn filled with medicines and ointment, as a protection against witches. He used it, like other doctors, for burning the grass, for burning the rubbish heaps before planting millet, and for protecting a child. When the millet crops are poor, people say the witches have eaten it, and the next year the chief sends for the doctor and his protective horn. . . . He comes and makes fire and treats the tinder with ointment from his horn, and each pile of weeds is lit from that fire. . . . He sends some to the chief to fire the grass for fresh grazing. Then there is much milk, the cows that eat that grass give much milk for the witches stay away and neither eat the millet nor throttle the cows. So with a child, if a man has lost many children and has one left, he calls the doctor to come with his protective medicine (*ilipingo*) and treat the child with medicines from his horn as a protection against witches. My father used the same horn for all these things.

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[1] For a description of the procedure, cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 115-16, 241-6.

If a man has quarrelled with a kinsman, or is conscious of 751
having bitter enemies, or hears that someone with whom he has [578]
had a dispute has 'gone to the doctors', he is likely to go to a horn
doctor for protective medicine, even though he is perfectly well.

'The horn' is believed to discover and punish the guilty whether 789 ●
they are known to the injured or not, but if someone uses it with- 751
out just cause the medicine will recoil on himself. The seven cases 754
of using the horn reported to us[1] were all used in revenge: two for theft, two for seduction, and three for withholding cattle due. And it is revenge that was emphasized in one account of the treatment:

> If someone has stolen my cow I go to a doctor and pay him a bull. [685]
> Then he prepares the medicine (the horn) and stands facing it, with a spear over his shoulder, pointing towards it, and he speaks aloud saying: 'So-and-so, if you have not taken the cow you will recover, if you have eaten it you will die.' Then the breath (*imbepo*) goes to the man named and if he has really stolen the cow he dies. . . .

But another informant, listing the contents of a 'horn', stressed the [278]
protective element. It contains 'the bile of a crocodile, the skin of a python, and *inyifwila* medicine (*vide* p. 58) which has been used to kill men' . . .

> If a witch comes to throttle and kill you then the bile of the crocodile throttles and strikes him [the witch], and the *inyifwila* does the same, it is to kill the witches, it spears those who come to throttle you. The skin of the python means that if people come to throttle you they find you have changed yourself into a python.

Another type of vengeance magic, *ilyepa*, is thought to work only between blood relatives.

> If your father-in-law is angry it is your children he kills, not yourself. [578]
> If the diviner says the disease comes from the woman's side of the family the protective medicine is given only to her, not to the man; if from his side only he is protected, not the wife. The relative who is angry drinks a medicine; he puts a barbed spear into the fire and when it is red hot he slashes a banana sucker with it and speaks the name, then the kinsman who is mentioned dies.

A third type is that used to secure property (*ukusinga*) and [685]
snare thieves or adulterers; for the exclusive rights of a husband [684]
over his wife are treated as property rights. Often a medicated stick is placed in a field to ward off thieves, and some husbands

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 212-56.

789 are said to give their wives a medicine (without their know-
751 ledge) which will cause any man who lies with them to fall ill
754 of gonorrhoea or some other venereal disease. Many Christians
[753] believe in this medicine and some inquired whether Europeans
did not use it also. One family of doctors are specialists in it:

> [791] The sons of Manyafu are very famous, they are great doctors. People fear them very much. No one can steal anything belonging to them or run off with their wives. If a man runs off with a wife of theirs, he will return their wife and pay. . . . Because when he has slept with the woman by night they stink in each other's nostrils, the woman stinks in the face of the man and he likewise in hers. And if rain falls by night the roof comes off the hut in which they sleep and the rain enters. Perhaps the man quarrels with the woman, perhaps frogs and snakes are numerous, perhaps gourds sprout in the house—sometimes they sprout bringing evil. So it is also if a man has run off with the wife of another and the husband goes to the sons of Manyafu. They agree to work, but he must pay them.

[681] Lyandileko, whose husband's family have owned a 'horn' for generations, was very insistent that vengeance magic maintained law and order for it could injure only the guilty. 'A thief feared to steal lest he be caught by my father-in-law (Mwaisyelage). He feared the horn if he used sorcery. He feared to seize another's cow thinking, "They will go to Mwaisyelage".'
[684] And protective medicines which cause an adulterer to fall ill of gonorrhoea, or a thief to die, are considered perfectly legitimate; the misfortune would not have befallen the man unless he had done wrong.

[648] The prohibition by the government of the *mwafi* oracle has puzzled people. Medicines are admittedly dangerous, but it is held that Europeans 'encourage' witches and sorcerers by forbidding the use of the one effective weapon against them, and doctors with vengeance magic or other strong medicines 'fear the fate of the *mwafi* doctors'. There is an inescapable contradiction here, the Nyakyusa relying on *mwafi* and vengeance magic as a means of discovering criminals, and the Europeans punishing any doctor found administering poison, or intimidating people by threats. Furthermore, it is widely believed that Europeans them-
[186] selves use strong medicines made up with blood. Any Europeans without an obvious occupation are suspect of being *abanyambuta*, who go around killing people and taking their blood for the Government to use for medicines. One of our European friends,

a missionary, was warned by her servants before Godfrey Wilson's 789
arrival in her neighbourhood 'not to go out at night as there were 751
abanyambuta about, sent by the Government to kill people and take 754
their blood', and women going for firewood made a long detour 186
to avoid his camp. One was overheard asking when she caught sight of him: 'Is that the man who kills people?' Angombwike explained that, since all really strong Nyakyusa medicines contained human blood, it was argued that European medicines, which were so powerful, must contain it also. 'They follow their own customs.'

It seems obvious to the Nyakyusa that Europeans must have strong medicines because their confidence and success are so great. Moreover, it is held (in theory) that they are immune to attacks from witchcraft. X, who had been a clerk and lost his job, and was bitter, expanded on this:

> People say that Europeans have *inyifwila* (*vide* p. 58), see they are brave, they do not fear, if someone seizes a spear they do not fear, they just come to him, they are very brave. And also the witches say that they are unable to choke Europeans. When we hear people boasting of their mystical power (*amanga*) we always say to them: 'But if that is so, go and choke a European, show us!' Then they always say, 'Oh no, we can't do that, when we go to a European house at night we
> find it all lighted up and flaming, we can't get near them.' I think [778]
> this is the power of the Holy Spirit which you Europeans have.

He came of a well-known family of doctors and perhaps spoke from first-hand knowledge. He just laughed at the suggestion that the light might come from lamps. But the fact that Europeans were
held to be immune did not prevent our servants and friends [753]
attributing our recurring attacks of malaria to witchcraft.

(*c*) DOCTORS

Among the Nyakyusa, as perhaps in every society, the doctors 791
with the greatest reputation are those at a distance, and a high proportion of the practitioners in the country are of foreign lineages, their fathers, or grandfathers, or great-grandfathers having come in, bringing medicines with them, and begun to practice. In fact, we were assured that there were *no* Nyakyusa
doctors who were famous, they were all Sangu, or Kinga, or Kisi, [439]
or from Ngonde or Misuku in Nyasaland, but detailed investiga- [278]
tion proved this to be false. The trade in medicines from a dist- [438]
ance is a very old one and continues today. As we have seen,

for an appropriate medicine, and his main function is organizing 791
the observances. 793

(*d*) SYMBOLISM

In the field of medicine imagination runs riot, and associations
are unpredictable. The ingredients of most medicines are professional 278
secrets and unknown to the user who takes the concoction 789
on trust from his doctor, and inquires no further. Therefore the
study of medicine is not linked to the study of social relationships
in the same manner as is the study of ritual, for the symbolism of
medicines is individual and free, whereas the symbolism of ritual
is common and obligatory.

Nevertheless, the imagination of doctors works within the
general symbolic system, and such knowledge as we have indicates
that many of the associations made are similar to those
used in ritual. In medicine, as in the rituals of kinship, one type of
banana stands for a male, another for a female, a banana sucker [831]
represents a kinsman, a sprouting shoot conception. Smithing and [326]
coition are felt to be alike, and the molten iron that trickles out of a
forge is linked with menstrual blood. Hair stands for growth, and a
bald pate a devastated field. A ring, or circumambulation, implies
a protecting fence. Pythons, crocodiles, leopards, and lions stand [825]
for power and majesty, spears and thorns for attack; vomiting and
emptiness for innocence, spitting for forgiveness. There is colour [827]
symbolism in medicines (though we know little of it save that the [822]
ikipiki which stands for the blood of the lineage is red, or reddish
brown), and auditory symbolism, the rumble of thunder and the
groaning of a bellows being identified. Men mime that which
they wish to avoid, as well as that which they desire; like things
are antagonistic as well as sympathetic. No doubt a laborious
study of prescriptions would reveal further general principles of
association, as well as the range of individual imagination, but
such a task has yet to be undertaken.

x 797 there?" And after he went there was much food.' In fact,
x 795 appears that he took the teachers and schoolchildren to the gr
that they might no longer be afraid of it: the girls gathered fi
[778] wood there, and everyone entered and made a noise, thus breaki
great taboos. But all this happened long ago (the visit to Mbyan
was in 1913 or 1914) and, as was indicated earlier, the comm
view among Christians is that pagan rituals *used* to be necess
and efficacious, but are so no longer. We were assured by Chri
ians who themselves took no part in twin rituals that 'forme
[845] people fell ill if they did not celebrate'. 'Yes, of course, they w
[753] very sick indeed in the old days, the whole body would swe
Some even maintained that it was still necessary for pagans
celebrate though not for Christians. A Christian chief explaine

> [778] The sacred grove of Mwakihaba is just here in my country: . . .
> the old days they used to take a little fresh milk and an unripe stem
> [789] bananas, and put them in the grove. . . . The next day the calab
> was full of milk and the stem was ripe. This was really so in the
> days, Kyala heard men and agreed to their requests in this way.
> went to ask for rain and food in the groves; the chief would kill a c
> and Kyala agreed, food and rain came. Now that the Gospel
> spread, since the Europeans have opened the Gospel to us Ky
> refuses to agree, he says: 'Since they are proud and refuse to hear
> Gospel I will discipline them', and he refuses to agree to the old ways.
> QUESTION: What about witchcraft?
> Perhaps there were people who were witches in the old days; at a
> [759] rate I know that when milk ran short and a man was accused to
> chief of bewitching the cattle, the chief used to take his cattle and dr
> him out of the country, and then milk was plentiful again. Of tha
> am sure.
> QUESTION: And now?
> No, it is not like that now.

Many pagans attribute the decline in fertility which is taki
[686] place, and the decrease in the yield of milk, to the decay of t
old communal rituals and the unhampered activities of witch
Nevertheless, as the number of Christians in an area increas
the pagans tend to curtail their rituals more and more. T
direct parallel between pagan confession, sacrifice, and co
munion with the shades, and the Holy Communion of t
Christian Church is recognized by many, and one is felt to repla
the other. Regarding the rituals of kinship we were repeate
told: 'We see that the Christians, who say the only rituals are t

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755 in the open air and not within the hut as on the previous day. But the patient was unwilling to be photographed. He feared, he said, that by the photo I would take „his inner man together with the medicine just accepted" with me to Europe. I tried to calm him, showing him some pictures of my family, and I also let him look through the view-finder of my camera, so that at last he was satisfied. Then, after feeling more confident, he told me the cause of the pains which led him to come to the doctor. He thought he had been bewitched, as he had met a descendant of a man whom some long time ago had killed one of his own ancestors.

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The Medicine Man and one of his patients. The medicines are spread out on the mat.

756 Then the medicine man also explained to me how he had come to the position of a doctor. He did not inherit his position from his father, but he was instructed in medical practices by another doctor. The circumstances which had led him to this position were the following.

[837] [789] Before his initiation to the medical practice he had entered into forbidden relations with the wife of another man. To protect himself from the magical revenge of the deceived husband and his kin he went to a medicine man to acquire antidotes against the expected bewitching. He had to pay two cows for this medicine, and as he had paid them, the medicine-man offered to initiate him into the secrets of the practice of a medicine-man. The character of the client, probably, had won his confidence, and indeed, the medicine-man whose guest I now was, made a profound impression on me.

754 He also described some forms of bewitching[8] for vengeance. For this purpose the avenger poisons a fowl in his own village uttering curses

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[8] Cf. G. Wilson, Introduction, p.277 (belief in witchcraft).

342
353 he had received this object from his ancestors and it must always hang
622 on this spot, as the ancestral spirits (*abasyuka*)[illegible] themselves controlled
778 its presence. It consisted of an *ulusinga*, i. e. the tail of an ox, but
[775] the upper part of it was hollow. In this hollow part medicines
(*ifingila*)[illegible] were kept. Yet another magical medicine, in the shape of a
[324] piece of bark of the tree called *Erythrophleum Guineense*[illegible] was fastened at the upper end of this sign. When my European attendant immediately said to the chief: "And from this piece you make your *mwafi*"[illegible], the chief exclaimed in astonishment: "*Umwe uswe Kyara!*" (You are sons of Kyara! i. e. You Europeans know everything.)

After this there was no more delay in revealing to us some more features of this sign of dignity. According to the belief of his fathers this object possessed a special *amaka* (power)[illegible], e. g. to defeat enemies, if the chief were to hold it directly against them. Also if a thief were
● [789] to try to enter the room by force, by making a hole beneath the wall of this part of the hut, he would be stricken by power coming from the *ulusinga* and he would have the impression that eyes are directed against him, and so be driven away.

[573] After these interesting communications I went to visit the hut of one of his wives, which still revealed the *inyumba*, the old-fashioned round structure of bamboo poles diverging from their upper end and thatched with grass[illegible].

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784 8. The frequent walks in company with the chief or some of his *amafumu* gave me several opportunities for enquiries. On one occasion,

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[illegible] Cf. Wilson, Burial, p. 9: *unsyuka* (Sing.); *Mackenzie*, p. 131: *basyuka* (Karonga).

[illegible] Cf. *Mackenzie*, p. 273: *ifingira* (Karonga).

[278] [illegible] The pharmacological substance of the bark (Cortex Erythrophlei, „Sassy-bark") is the alcaloid Erythrophleine which produces the same typical effects on the heart as the Digitalis-group (cf. C. G. *Santesson*: Pfeilgiftstudien XII. *Arkiv för Botanik* 27 A, No 4, Stockholm 1935, p. 6).

[illegible] Cf. Wilson, Land Rights, p. 35; *Merensky*, p. 126; *Fülleborn*, p. 355.

[illegible] *amaka* is not a specific expression for „magical" or (religious) „supernatural" power, although, from the European standpoint this meaning may be connected with the word in specific cases, but generally it means any striking expression or effect of a quality of a person or object, e. g. [illegible] amaka, in this word is power. This word is, therefore, a parallel to the Austronesian, especially Polynesian word *mana*, examined in my treatise „Mana. The term of that what is exceedingly striking". (Staatliches Forschungsinstitut für Völkerkunde, 1. Reihe, Ethnographie, Vol. 1, Leipzig 1922. If the Nyakyusa wishes to say that a phenomenon is "supernatural", then he connects it with Kyara, or he names it directly "Kiara" (cf. Merensky, p. 118 [107, 108]).

[illegible] Cf. *Fülleborn*, p. 377, fig. 145: Schematical average of a round-hut (as also to be found with the Nyakyusa still today).